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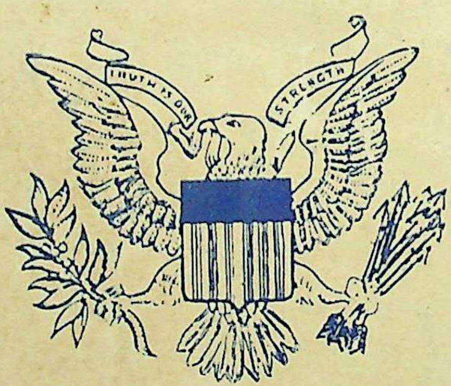
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The fifty plays in this volume have been compiled to satisfy the constant demand for suitable royalty-free one-act plays for the younger grades.

Qualifications for primary plays are exacting. They should be simple to produce with inexpensive but interesting costuming. Treatment of subject matter should excite the young child's imagination. Parts should be easy to learn and, wherever possible, there should be opportunities for the entire class to participate.

The plays in this collection meet all of these requirements. They offer teachers and other group leaders an additional tool for impressing children with the significance of holidays and the importance of such intangible ideas as good health, safety, courtesy, kindness to animals, etc. The children's reading may be stimulated also by dramatizations of such perennial favorites as Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, and Snow White.

Performance records of these plays in schools throughout the country have proved their popularity.

Every teacher who has ever searched for suitable primary plays will welcome this anthology. Church, scout, club, and other youth directors will find this book an invaluable source of dramatic material.

LITTLE PLAYS
for
LITTLE PLAYERS

Little Plays for Little Players

Fifty Non-Royalty Plays
for Children

Edited by
SYLVIA E. KAMERMAN

Publishers PLAYS, INC. *Boston*

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PREFACE

There is a steady demand for plays suitable for production by primary grades. But the qualifications for plays of this type are probably more rigid than for any other group. They must be especially easy to produce, requiring simple properties and settings, and yet they must excite the imagination of the young child. The parts must not be difficult to learn, and the costuming possibilities should be interesting but not elaborate. Moreover, it is most desirable to have plays with a flexible number of characters for the early grades, so that a large proportion of the class may participate.

It is with these requirements in mind that the plays for this anthology have been selected. To meet the demands for plays the year round, there is a wide variety of material covering all the important holidays, as well as dramatizations of legends and fantasies which young children love. Often, intangible ideas such as the importance of good health, safety, voting, etc., can be effectively taught through dramatic means, and this book therefore contains plays on these subjects.

All of these plays are complete dramatic units, but for those groups that prefer to create their own dramatic material, the plays may be used as a framework to be expanded and developed to fit the class program.

The plays in this collection were originally published in *PLAYS, The Drama Magazine for Young People*, and have been selected on the basis of production records showing which plays were the most popular and best satisfied the needs of the younger age group.

I hope that having these tested plays in permanent book form will be helpful and enjoyable to both teachers and children.

Sylvia E. Kamerman

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LITTLE PLAYS
for
LITTLE PLAYERS

Birthday Gift

by Esther MacLellan and Catherine V. Schroll

Characters

Aunt Susan
George, *her son*
Debby
Mr. Robbins, *a neighbor*
Mr. Lincoln
Mr. Morrow
Mrs. Randall, *Debby's grandmother*

Time: *During the Civil War.*

Setting: *A street in Washington, D. C. At the front, left, is a tree with a stuffed cat sitting on one branch.*

At Rise: *Stage is empty. Enter, right,* Aunt Susan *and* George.

Aunt Susan (*Handing a broom to* George): Now, George, I want this sidewalk cleaned. And when you're finished you may play with your cousin, Debby.

George: Do I have to, Mother? I was going over to Tom's and . . .

Aunt Susan: Be nice to Debby, my boy. Remember that today's her birthday. The poor child is lonely, so far away from home.

George: All right, Mother.

Aunt Susan: Good. (*She exits right. There is a meow off stage, and* Debby *runs on left.*)

Debby: George! Did you hear that?

George (*Leaning on broom*): Of course I did. Boys' ears are better than girls'. They're bigger.

Debby: It's a cat, isn't it? (*Wistfully*) Once I had the sweetest little kitten. (*Pause*) Where do you suppose it is?

George: Your kitten? How should I know?

Debby: Don't tease, George. My kitten's home. I mean the one we heard meowing.

George: Oh, that. It's up there in the tree. (*Points to branch*)

Debby (*Looks up*): So it is, poor thing. Probably a dog was chasing it and now it can't get down. Dear, frightened pussy. Can't you reach it, George?

George: No, sir. That little old cat's too far up.

Debby: Couldn't you climb the tree?

George: Reckon not. Those branches are too weak. I'm *heavy*.

Debby: You are not. You're downright skinny. (*Calls*) Aunt Susan! Aunt Susan! (Aunt Susan *enters*.)

Aunt Susan: What is it, Debby? You know I'm busy.

Debby: There's a little cat in the tree. Won't you make George get it? It's frightened, terribly frightened.

George: It's no more frightened than I am. I'm not climbing any tree after a scratchy, old cat.

Debby: You're acting like a cat yourself, George. A great big 'fraidy cat! (Mr. Robbins *enters left*.)

Debby: Oh, Mr. Robbins, won't you help me?

Mr. Robbins: Why, Debby, you seem quite upset. What's the matter?

Debby: Would you please reach up in the tree and get me the little cat?

Mr. Robbins: Up in the tree, eh? I didn't know you had a kitten.

Debby: I don't, but I wish I did. (*To* Aunt Susan) Couldn't I keep the kitten for my own? It's my birthday.

George: Just like a girl! How do you expect to keep the cat when you don't even have it?

Debby: But could I if I did? Could I?

AUNT SUSAN: Goodness me, child. Why not? But before you start worrying about keeping the cat, you'd first better get it.

MR. ROBBINS (*At tree*): I'm sorry, Debby, but I fear that I'm not tall enough to reach the branch where the cat is sitting. Perhaps if we called, it would come down. Here, pussy, pussy, pussy.

DEBBY: What a silly little kitten! It's climbing higher into the tree. Oh, Mr. Robbins, do you think . . . perhaps . . . Have you ever climbed a tree?

MR. ROBBINS (*Laughing*): Many times, dear child, but that was long ago. My tree-climbing days are over.

DEBBY: George, won't you, please?

GEORGE (*Firmly*): No, sir. I'm climbing nothing.

AUNT SUSAN: George! Why don't you help your cousin?

GEORGE (*Whining*): I'm scared of that old cat!

DEBBY (*Impatiently*): It won't hurt you, George.

GEORGE: It will, too. I don't like it, and it doesn't like me. (*Enter* MR. LINCOLN *and* MR. MORROW. *They walk slowly across the stage and pause beneath the tree.*)

MR. LINCOLN: Mr. Morrow, you must know that there are many serious problems before me in these terrible days.

MR. MORROW: I do, sir. I do, indeed. However, if I could have only a few minutes of your valuable time . . . I tell you, sir, I am in great need of your advice.

MR. LINCOLN (*Wearily*): Very well. (*They talk in low tones.*)

DEBBY: Oh, Aunt Susan, look! Isn't that gentleman tall?

AUNT SUSAN: Now, see here, Debby. If you're thinking what I think you're thinking, stop thinking it. You know you shouldn't bother strangers with your troubles.

DEBBY: But he's so *tall*, Aunt Susan. He looks kind, too. I know he would want to help the kitten.

AUNT SUSAN: Debby! That's a serious gentleman. He has too much on his mind to be bothered with little girls and little cats.

MR. ROBBINS (*Kindly*): Oh, let her ask. It will take but a moment and today is the child's birthday.

DEBBY (*Going slowly toward* MR. LINCOLN): Please, sir.

MR. MORROW: Child! Child! We are talking about serious matters. How dare you interrupt?

DEBBY: Excuse me, sir, I didn't know.

MR. LINCOLN: Let the child speak.

MR. MORROW: But such rudeness! Don't these people know who you are, sir?

MR. LINCOLN: I hope they do not. What do you wish, my dear?

DEBBY: Well, sir,, my name's Debby and today's my birthday and . . . (*Sighs*)

MR. LINCOLN: Why, Debby, you're too young to sigh over having a birthday. You should be eating a great big cake with lots of candles . . . yes, lots of candles on it. I believe you're a young lady who would have at least nine on her birthday cake. Am I right?

DEBBY: Yes, sir.

MR. LINCOLN: Well, let's see. What day is it?

DEBBY: February the twelfth, sir.

MR. LINCOLN: February the twelfth? Do you know something, Debby? I hadn't thought of it before, but today is my birthday, too.

DEBBY: Didn't you remember, sir? I've been thinking about mine for ages. But it hasn't been much fun.

MR. LINCOLN: Hasn't it? Mine hasn't either, Debby dear. But you're too young for sighs and birthday troubles. What's the matter?

DEBBY: Well, Father's in the army . . . .

AUNT SUSAN: Debby! You mustn't chatter so much. The gentleman is busy.

DEBBY: Excuse me, sir. I really didn't mean it.

MR. LINCOLN: That's all right, Debby. You may talk as much as you wish. After all, you and I aren't strangers when we have the same birthday together.

DEBBY: You see, sir, it's the little cat. (*Pointing*) It's up there in the tree and can't get down. You are so tall that I thought perhaps you'd get it for me. Mr. Robbins doesn't climb trees any more, and George is too scarey to help, and Aunt Susan is a lady, and I'm too little, and . . .

MR. LINCOLN (*Laughing*): Never mind, Debby. I see that fate has picked me for this role. I appear to be just right for the part. (*Gets cat off branch*) There you are, here's your kitten. And a very happy birthday to you, my child. (*Raises hat and exits, followed by* MR. MORROW.)

DEBBY (*Calling after him*): A happy birthday to you, too, sir!

AUNT SUSAN: Indeed, that was very thoughtful of the gentleman.

DEBBY: Wasn't he splendid! He had the kindest eyes. Oh, I wish I knew his name.

AUNT SUSAN: I'm sure I couldn't help you, Debby. I must say, though, he looks very familiar. I feel certain I have seen him many times.

DEBBY: If I had only asked who he was. It's his birthday, too, and I wanted to name my cat for him.

GEORGE: Humph! That's too bad. I guess the gentleman won't mind if that scrawny, skinny, funny-looking cat's not named for him.

DEBBY (*Indignantly*): It isn't scrawny! It's my birthday kitten and the sweetest, dearest, little pussy in the world!

GEORGE (*Muttering*): It's the scratchiest, stubbornest, old cat in Washington, if anybody asks me.

AUNT SUSAN: George! Where's that broom? The only thing anybody asked you was to sweep the sidewalk. (MRS. RANDALL *enters right.*)

DEBBY: Granny! Granny! Look at my birthday cat. Granny dear, I wish you had seen the gentleman who gave him to me.

MRS. RANDALL: I did, Debby, from my window.

DEBBY: Wasn't he fine? Wasn't he splendid?

MRS. RANDALL: The greatest man in all the world, my dear.

DEBBY: Then you know him?

MRS. RANDALL: Yes.

AUNT SUSAN: I thought there was something familiar about his face.

DEBBY: Who was the stranger, Granny? Please tell me.

MRS. RANDALL: Your kind stranger, Debby, was the President of the United States.

AUNT SUSAN: Mr. Abraham Lincoln! To think of the President of the United States bothering to help a little cat!

MR. ROBBINS: Mr. Lincoln is never too busy to do an act of kindness, is he, Mrs. Randall?

MRS. RANDALL: Never.

DEBBY: February twelfth! My birthday and Mr. Lincoln's. I'll never forget him, Granny, never. Not even if I live to be a hundred.

THE END

The Gift of the Fairies

by Alice Very

Characters

MRS. NANCY LINCOLN
MR. TOM LINCOLN
BABY ABRAHAM (*doll*)
RUNNING DEER
BRIGHT WATER
BEAR'S PAW
BIG TREE
LAZY SQUAW
INDIAN ROCK
CROW FEATHER
LOOKS AT SUN *Indian Fairies*
RAIN IN FACE
MOON SHINE
CHIEF TOMAHAWK
WILD HORSE
EAGLE EYE
RUSHING WIND
STRAIGHT ARROW

TIME: *February, 1809.*
SETTING: *Inside log cabin at Rock Spring Farm, Kentucky.*
AT RISE: NANCY LINCOLN *sits rocking baby.* TOM LINCOLN *lies asleep on bearskin by fire.*

NANCY:
Sleep, baby, my boy,
The fire will warm you;
No cold wind'll nip you,
No Indian harm you.
Your home's a poor cabin
By lonely Rock Spring,
But the child of free people
Is more than a king.
(*Lays baby in cradle; leans back, drowsing. Enter* FAIRIES.)

RUNNING DEER:
Now people are sleeping
And out of the way,
We fairies come creeping—
Your night is our day.

BRIGHT WATER:
From the banks of the creek,
From the cave by the spring,
To the child in the cradle
Our welcome we bring.

BEAR'S PAW:
From snow-covered hills
And shaggy bears' dens,
We come with our gifts
For the children of men.

BIG TREE:
The trees of the forest
Have whispered his name;
To Abraham Lincoln
Be greatness and fame!
(*Lays wreath of oak leaves on cradle.*)

LAZY SQUAW:
The trees of the forest
Can give him no gold.

Be poor as a rabbit
And hungry and cold!

INDIAN ROCK:
Go away, naughty fairy!
Don't start the boy wrong.
He'll work for his living;
We'll make him grow strong.

CROW FEATHER:
He'll never be handsome
Or pretty, you know;
We'll give him a face
That would frighten a crow.

LOOKS AT SUN:
His face will be grand
As a high, rocky hill,
With the glow of his smile
Like the sun on it still.

RAIN IN FACE:
A bucket of tears
And troubles we bring him,
With swarms of mosquitoes
And hornets to sting him.

MOON SHINE:
From laughter and dreams
We'll weave him a cloak.
So your bites and your stings
Will be only a joke.

NANCY (*Stirring, while* FAIRIES *hide*):
Lie still, little baby,
Your mammy is near;
It's only the wind
In the chimney you hear.
(*Tucks blanket around baby, drowses while* FAIRIES *come out again.*)

CHIEF TOMAHAWK:
You foolish young fairies,
Don't favor that child;
The forest is ours;
Let it always be wild!

WILD HORSE:
These men and their children
Are always the same;
With hobbles and switches
They'd make us be tame.

EAGLE EYE:
This boy in the cradle's
A new kind of man—
The first that I've seen
Since the country began.

RUSHING WIND:
And so we've brought something
He'll never forget.
He'll breathe the free air
Of the wilderness yet.

STRAIGHT ARROW:
The great wind will blow him
And won't let him be,
Till he tells all the people,
"We'll set the slaves free!"

(FAIRIES *form circle in Indian war-dance.*)

NANCY (*Waking*):
O Tom, go and see
What's there at the door!
I'm sure I heard something
Walk over the floor.

(*As* TOM *rises*, FAIRIES *run out of door.*)

TOM:
It's only the wind

Has blown the door wide.
And brown, withered leaves
It's driven inside.

NANCY:
Look, Tom, how the brown
Leaves are shaped in a ring—
It looks like a crown
To put on a king.
(*Places wreath on baby's head.*)

TOM:
Now don't you go putting
A crown on his head.
It wasn't for that
Our grandfathers bled.
He's something much better:
The title he rates
Is, Citizen born,
Of the United States.

NANCY (*Taking off wreath*):
Well, have it your way,
But you know, I've been thinking,
This baby, some day,
Will be President Lincoln.

THE END

President Lincoln's Children

by Alice Very

Characters

BUD TAFT
TAD LINCOLN
WILLIE LINCOLN
JULIA TAFT
A SOLDIER'S MOTHER
ABRAHAM LINCOLN

SETTING: *A corridor in the White House.*

AT RISE: BUD *and* TAD *are arguing.*

BUD: Say, Tad, you oughtn't to call President Lincoln "Papa."

TAD: Why oughtn't I to?

BUD: You ought to call him "Mr. President." He's the President of the United States.

TAD: But he *is* my papa.

BUD: He's too busy licking the rebels to be your papa any more. (*Enter* WILLIE, *running with a doll.*)

TAD: Willie, it isn't true what Bud says—Papa is still our papa, isn't he?

WILLIE (*Holding doll up by hair*): Of course he is. (*Enter* JULIA, *running.*)

JULIA: Give me back my doll! Give me back my Lucy!

WILLIE: She's a runaway slave. I rescued her from you. You're a slaver.

JULIA: I am not a slaver!

WILLIE: Oh, yes, you are! You're a Southerner and Lucy's your slave.

BUD: And I'm John Brown! (*Seizing* JULIA) Now we've got you. We'll tie old Julia to a sour apple tree!

BOYS (*Singing to tune of John Brown's Body*):
We'll tie old Julia to a sour apple tree!
We'll tie old Julia to a sour apple tree!
As we go marching on!

(BOYS *tie* JULIA *by her sash to the doorknob*.)

JULIA: You stop or I'll tell President Lincoln! (*Enter* SOLDIER'S MOTHER, *wiping her eyes with a handkerchief*.)

SOLDIER'S MOTHER: Is this the way to President Lincoln's office?

TAD: Yes, ma'am.

WILLIE: Right this way, ma'am. (*Looses* JULIA *and opens door*.) Papa, a lady to see you!

PRESIDENT LINCOLN: Tell her to come in. (MOTHER *goes in and closes door*.)

BUD: Wonder what she wanted.

JULIA: She was crying.

WILLIE: People are always coming to see him. Sometimes they're crying; sometimes they're mad.

TAD: But Papa always knows what to do with them.

JULIA: What do you suppose people will think, seeing a lady tied to the President's door?

WILLIE: If you'll salute the flag of the United States, we'll let you go.

JULIA: All right, I will. (*Salutes flag*) Now give me back my doll.

WILLIE: Oh, she's free now. She's going to join the army.

TAD: She's going to be a Zouave.

BUD: We'll pin up her skirts and make Turkish trousers. (JULIA *gives* BUD *pins from pocket hanging at waist*.) Like this—see? (*Pins up skirt*.)

JULIA: But what about her hair?

BUD: We can cover it up with a red Zouave cap.

WILLIE: I know where you can get a red cap. (*Rushing into study*)

Papa, may I borrow your handkerchief? (*Comes out with red bandanna, which they tie around doll's head like turban.*)

Bud: Now all she needs is a sword.

Tad: I know where you can get a sword. (*Rushing into study*) Papa, may I borrow your paper knife? (*Comes out with paper knife.*)

Willie (*Holding up doll, making it wave paper knife*): See, I'm a Zouave! My name's Jack. I can chase all the rebels from here to Richmond! See me salute the flag! (*Makes doll salute flag.*)

All (*Sing to tune of "The Battle Cry of Freedom"*):

Union forever!
Hurrah, boys, hurrah!
Down with the traitor,
Up with the star!
Oh, we'll rally round the flag, boys,
We'll rally once again,
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom!

Julia: Willie, was the lady still crying?

Willie: A little.

Julia: What was she saying?

Willie: Oh, something about her boy. I guess they're going to shoot him.

Julia: What for?

Tad: I heard them say something about sleeping on duty.

Julia: How awful—to be shot for sleeping!

Willie: It's awful to go to sleep on duty! The whole army might have been killed!

Tad: Papa might have been killed!

Bud: We might have been killed!

Julia: I don't care; it's awful to shoot anybody.

Willie: Come on, let's play the doll's a traitor.

Bud: We'll shoot him for a spy.

Julia: No, don't have him a traitor!

WILLIE: We'll have a trial. I'll be the judge. Bud, you can accuse him. Julia can defend him.

TAD: What can I do?

WILLIE: You can be the guard and hold the prisoner. (*Gives the doll to* TAD, *then pulls benches around facing each other, sits on one, while* TAD, *holding doll,* BUD, *and* JULIA *stand behind other.*) All right, Mr. Bud Taft; what has this Jack done?

BUD: He's a spy and a traitor, your honor. We caught him trying to sneak through the rebel lines.

WILLIE: What have you to say for him, Miss Julia?

JULIA: He isn't a traitor at all, Judge. He was really spying for the Union side.

WILLIE: How do you plead, Jack?—Tad, you speak for him—guilty or not guilty?

TAD: Guilty—but I won't do it again.

WILLIE: Jack, the court finds you guilty and sentences you to be shot.

JULIA: Oh, please don't shoot my doll!

TAD: Besides you haven't any gun.

BUD: We'll stab him with his own sword. (*Takes paper knife and holds over doll.*)

JULIA: Ohh! (*Door opens and* SOLDIER'S MOTHER *enters, smiling, and holding envelope with large red seal.*)

MOTHER (*To* PRESIDENT): Thank you, Mr. President—I can't tell you—how much this means! (*To* CHILDREN) What a great, good man Mr. Lincoln is! (*Closes door and hurries away.*)

WILLIE: He must have given her a pardon.

TAD: Let's ask him to give Jack a pardon.

JULIA: Do you think he would?

BUD: Would you dare to ask him?

WILLIE: Of course! (*Opens door*) Papa, we want you to do something for us.

LINCOLN (*Coming to door*): Well, what is it?

WILLIE (*Holding up doll*): Our doll is a Union soldier.

Bud: But he's guilty of treason and sentenced to be shot.

Julia: But he says he won't do it again.

Tad: Will you give him a pardon, Papa?

Lincoln (*Taking doll and pretending to talk to it*): Well, Jack, this is a very serious charge against you. But I'm afraid shooting you won't do you much good. It wouldn't teach you a lesson. And what people like you need is a lesson.

Willie: Even traitors to the Union, Papa?

Tad: Even bad people that keep slaves?

Bud: Even soldiers that go to sleep on duty?

Lincoln: It's very much the same thing. "Bad people," most of them, are just asleep. We've got to wake them up. Punish them, sometimes, but not with malice. With charity—

Willie: What's "malice"?

Lincoln: Well, malice, I guess, is just plain cussedness. Not much of it, but what there is, surely makes a lot of trouble.

Tad: And what's "charity"?

Lincoln: And charity is mostly putting yourself in the other fellow's place. Forgiving him, the way you'd like to be forgiven yourself.

Willie: Do you think we ought to forgive Jack?

Lincoln: Now that isn't for you to say. You've put the matter into my hands. (*Goes to desk, writes on paper, and comes to door again with paper.*) Who is Jack's lawyer?

Julia: I am.

Lincoln: Very well. (*Giving doll and paper to* Julia) I deliver the prisoner into your care. You are responsible for his future good behavior.

Julia: Oh, thank you, Mr. Lincoln!

Boys (*Crowding around*): Let's see the paper!

Willie (*Reading*): "The doll Jack is pardoned."

Tad: He's pardoned!

Willie (*Reading*): "By order of the President, A. Lincoln" (*Holds up paper.*)

BUD: It's the real thing! (PRESIDENT LINCOLN *smiles at children, then closes door.*)

WILLIE: Now we'll have a parade for Jack!

TAD: And for Papa!

BUD: Make Jack say "Hurrah for the President of the United States!"

JULIA (*Holding up doll*): Hurrah!

BOYS: Hurrah!

ALL (*Marching, with* JULIA *at head, sing*):
"And we'll rally round the flag, boys,
We'll rally once again,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom!"

THE END

The Littlest Artist

by Rowena Bennett

Characters

BENJAMIN BRAGG	KING WINTER
SYLVIA SMART	ELVES
JACK FROST	

TIME: *The eve of St. Valentine's Day.*

SETTING: BENJAMIN BRAGG'S *playroom.*

AT RISE: BENJAMIN BRAGG *is seen seated at his desk cutting and pasting. He whistles as he works.* SYLVIA SMART *appears at the window behind him. She is bundled up in winter clothes and carries a workbag on her arm. She knocks at the window and calls to* BENJAMIN. *He starts, and looks around.*

SYLVIA:
What are you doing, O Benjamin Bragg,
With scissors and cardboard and little paint rag,
What are you doing, O Benjamin Bragg?

BENJAMIN (*Holding up his work for her to see*):
I'm cutting a heart and I'm pasting on lace;
And I'm drawing a cupid with chubby, round face.
For the King of the Winter, at quarter to nine,
Is giving a prize for the best Valentine . . .

SYLVIA:
Oh, is it too late for myself to begin
To work for the prize?

BENJAMIN: Of course not, come in. (*He beckons to her and she passes the window, entering from right.*)

SYLVIA (*Taking off her wraps and seating herself in the rocker*):
I'll have to get busy and try for the prize.
I know what I'll do! I'll be clever and wise.
(*She takes sewing things from her workbag*)
I'll make a fine pin-cushion, just the right size.
I'll cut out my cloth in the shape of a heart
And the prize will be given to Sylvia Smart.

BENJAMIN (*Laughing*):
I don't mind your making a cushion at all,
Or whether it's large, or whether it's small;
But as for the prize, that's "all in the bag."
Old Winter will give it to Benjamin Bragg.

SYLVIA:
Now don't be too sure. It's *time* that will tell.
You know *that* yourself and you know it right well.
Let's hum as we work, and work as we hum,
So time will go quickly and evening will come.
(*They hum a tune together. As they do so a small figure passes the window behind them. There is a knock at the door.*)

BENJAMIN:
Hello! Who is knocking? Come in, if you please,
And shut the door after, or else we will freeze.
(*Enter* JACK FROST, *disguised as a small child. He carries a suitcase labelled "Water Colors"*)

SYLVIA: Dear me! Who are *you?* You're only a baby. . . .

BENJAMIN: He lives in the new house that's down the street, maybe . . .

JACK FROST:
I've come to try out for the Valentine prize
And please do not judge me at all by my size.

BENJAMIN (*With a scornful laugh*):
You poor little fellow you surely don't think
We'll let you have paper or scissors or ink—

SYLVIA: Or satins for sewing. I'm 'fraid you would soil them.

BENJAMIN: We can't lend you such things, because you would *spoil* them.

JACK FROST:
I'm not here to borrow. I have my own paint-box
And brushes and palette all packed in this quaint-box.
I'll use for a canvas that wide window pane.
I'll sketch in a mountain and etch in a plain—

BENJAMIN (*Aside to* SYLVIA):
He's not just a baby. He can't be quite sane
To paint Valentine pictures on a window pane
With weak water colors that trickle and dribble—

SYLVIA: Oh, let him alone! We can wash off his scribble.

JACK FROST (*Running eagerly to window and opening his paint box*):
I really won't bother you two while I try it—(*He pulls the window curtains almost shut, and, standing in the crack between them, works with his brushes, back to the audience. In other words, the audience can see him working, but cannot see his work, which is hidden from view by the draperies.*)

BENJAMIN: All right, little boy, if you'll only be quiet. (*All three work silently for a while. The twilight deepens. Outside sleigh bells ring and a distant song is heard—"Jingle Bells"*)

SYLVIA (*Picking up the song and adapting her own words to the chorus*):
Valentines, Valentines, oh, what fun they are!
Cut from lace and shaped like hearts or pointed like a star—
Valentines, Valentines, oh what fun to send
Valentines in envelopes that will surprise a friend.
(BENJAMIN *repeats the song.*)

SYLVIA:
There! My Valentine is done!
Isn't it a pretty one?

Benjamin:
Very pretty! But I'm 'fraid
Mine is really better made
Don't feel badly if I win—
(*He holds his up for her to see. There is a sound of trumpets outside.*)
Sylvia: Quick! King Winter's coming in—(*They run around picking up scraps and clearing the room.*)
Jack Frost (*Stepping back and closing the curtain*):
I will keep my picture hidden
'Til the time when I am bidden
By King Wintertime to show it—
Benjamin (*Aside to* Sylvia):
If that little boy could know it
No one wants to see his picture—
Sylvia (*Aside to* Benjamin):
It will be a silly mixture
Made of scribbling and of daubing—
But we mustn't start him sobbing.
(*To* Jack Frost)
Come and help us greet King Winter,
Little neighbor,
(*A knocking is heard.*)
Benjamin (*Opening the door*):
Please to enter,
Noble monarch of the snow time,
You shall see our work in no time
(*Enter* King Winter *and attendants, who may be elves or forest animals.*)
King:
Ah! Good evening everyone.
Though the day is past and done
We have not found 'neath the sun
Any Valentine of size

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LUCKNOW.

That is worthy in our eyes
Of King Winter's annual prize.

SYLVIA and BENJAMIN (*Together as they hold up their Valentines*):
Here's a Valentine of size
That is worth King Winter's prize
(*Each tries to push the other aside. They poke their Valentines almost into his face.*)

KING:
Very nice, quite nice indeed!
But there surely is no need
Of this pushing and this poking
It is really quite provoking—
(*He sees* JACK FROST)
Who's this patient little fellow
In a muffler, red and yellow,
Have you made a picture for me?

JACK FROST (*Quaintly*):
Yes, Old Winter, it is for thee,
It will show that I adore thee!
Come and see it, I implore thee.
(*He runs to the window and pulls back the curtains. A glittering frost picture is revealed.*)

EVERYBODY (*In sudden ecstasy*): Oh!!! (JACK FROST *throws off his hat and coat and stands before the others in a white, spangled, elfin costume.*)

EVERYBODY (*In astonishment*): Jack Frost!

JACK FROST: I trust you like my strange surprise—

KING: Yes, you've won King Winter's prize. (*He puts a silver chain around* JACK'S *neck.*)

SYLVIA and BENJAMIN:
Yes, you've won King Winter's prize!
Just to think so small a boy
Can give everyone such joy
Painting pictures like a master . . .

KING: No one ever painted faster!
BENJAMIN (*Thoughtfully*):
It is not so very wise,
Judging people by their size—
SYLVIA: No, it's not so very wise
Judging people by their size—
KING:
Never did a friend of mine
Make so fair a Valentine.
ALL:
Give a cheer for Jackie Frost
May his talents not be lost!
May our windows be embossed
Every year by Jackie Frost!
Hurrah!

THE END

The Queen with the Broken Heart

by Catherine Urban

Characters

QUEEN OF HEARTS
KING OF HEARTS
LADY-IN-WAITING
PAGE
FAIRY GODMOTHER
SPRING

SETTING: *The palace.*

AT RISE: *The* QUEEN *sits near a table on which is a small plant. She is knitting and now and then glances at the* KING *who sits slumped down in an easy chair, his feet on a hassock, fast asleep. A pile of large books is on the floor beside him. In the rear, the* PAGE *and* LADY-IN-WAITING *whisper together and sadly shake their heads. The* QUEEN *glances at the* KING, *sniffs, and putting down her knitting, takes up a handkerchief and sobs loudly into it.*

LADY-IN-WAITING (*Rushing forward*): Oh, my Queen, do not weep!

PAGE (*Also forward*): My dear mistress, do not distress yourself!

LADY-IN-WAITING (*As the* QUEEN *sobs louder*): My dear, you will ruin your beautiful eyes!

QUEEN (*Sniffs*): And of what good are beautiful eyes, if no one ever looks into them?

LADY-IN-WAITING (*Glancing at the* KING): The lazy, thoughtless brute!

PAGE: But my King is worn out. (LADY-IN-WAITING *sniffs.*)

QUEEN (*Sobs*): He does not love me any more! My heart is broken!

PAGE: Oh, I am sure, my dear Queen . . .

LADY-IN-WAITING (*About to prod* KING): I'll wake up the lazy thing!

PAGE (*Hurriedly*): Oh, no! No! You know how angry he becomes if he is disturbed. And he has a lot on his mind! He needs his rest! (*The* QUEEN *sobs.*)

LADY-IN-WAITING: Rubbish! He has nothing on his mind! These books! (*Kicks at them*) They are nothing but an excuse! He only pretends that he is busy so he may tire sooner and sleep longer!

PAGE: He is worn out with affairs of state!

LADY-IN-WAITING: Affairs of state! What affairs of state have we had? We are at peace! The people are busy and prosperous! The crops are good! But the better things are, the lazier the King has become! Why, we haven't had a visiting ambassador for months! We haven't had a party for over a year!

QUEEN (*Sobs as she touches the plant*): And my King hasn't given me a gift for ages and ages! This little plant is the last thing he gave me. (*Sighs. Gets up and picks up the plant.*) I will go back to my old home! I will take this plant and cherish it for the rest of my days, for it will remind me of happy, happy days when my King loved me! (*Sobs*)

LADY-IN-WAITING: Oh, my Queen, do not even think of leaving us!

PAGE: The people worship you!

LADY-IN-WAITING: We all love you!

QUEEN (*Glancing at the* KING *and sighing*): My King does not love me! He has forgotten that I exist! Oh, if he would only notice me once more! We were so happy when we were first married! But, now, I must go . . .

PAGE: Oh, please, your majesty, do not go! (*Glances about worriedly*) We must think of something!

LADY-IN-WAITING: He needs a good jolt!

QUEEN: If I go, perhaps . . . he . . . will miss me a little!

PAGE: But the people would be angry! They love you! We must do something! We must wake him up and make him realize . . .

QUEEN: No, love must come from the heart . . .

LADY-IN-WAITING: Your fairy godmother! She could help you!

QUEEN: My fairy godmother!

LADY-IN-WAITING: Of course, don't you remember? Rub your locket and she will come!

QUEEN: My locket! I had forgotten! (*Picks up the heart-shaped locket that hangs about her neck and rubs it. The* FAIRY GODMOTHER *enters.*)

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Well! You finally had sense enough to call me! I've been wondering how long you would put up with this situation!

QUEEN: You mean you can help me? You can make my King love me again?

FAIRY GODMOTHER: He still loves you.

QUEEN: But he can't! He never says so! It has been months since he has paid me the slightest notice . . . much less the lovely compliments he used to.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: He's just in a rut.

QUEEN: But I can't go on this way! It's so lonely! I don't believe he loves me!

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Oh, you women! You always have to be shown!

QUEEN (*Thoughtfully*): Yes, it is true . . . one likes to be told now and then.

LADY-IN-WAITING: But what can we do? How can we make the King realize the Queen is unhappy?

FAIRY GODMOTHER: He needs a dash of spring in his blood to wake him up!

PAGE: But this is February!

FAIRY GODMOTHER: I will call Spring! She will bring her magic formula! (*Waves her wand*) Come, Spring! Come from your sleep! (SPRING *enters sleepily.*)

SPRING: Oh, why did you call me? I was having such a wonderful dream. (*Rubs her eyes sleepily.*)

FAIRY GODMOTHER: I am sorry to disturb you, but the King needs a shot of your magic formula. He is growing old before his time.

SPRING: I have heard tell that he no longer walks in the Garden of Youth.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Please use your magic needle!

QUEEN: Oh, Spring, give him back a youthful heart!

SPRING: Well! (*Yawns*) But I do think that you could have waited a few months. (*Goes to* KING *and pretends to use a hypodermic needle*) There! That should do it! That formula is made up of the fragrance of honeysuckle, the lilt of a nightingale's song, and a breath of a soft breeze.

QUEEN: Oh, thank you! Thank you! I know how wonderful your magic is, for each year when you come to us, we all feel happy and gay.

SPRING (*Yawns*): Thank you. I only hope that I can get back to sleep again.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Of course you can. (*Waves her wand*) I have a special power from the Sandman for that! You had better go quickly or you will fall asleep here. Page, help Spring to her coach. (PAGE *bows and exits with* SPRING.)

QUEEN (*Glancing at the* KING, *who stretches*): Oh, he is awakening!

KING: Darling Queen, where have you been for such a long time?

QUEEN: Oh, my King, I have been right here.

KING (*Getting to his feet and bowing over her hand*): You are so beautiful, my beloved!

LADY-IN-WAITING: Oh, it is working! It is working! (PAGE *enters and smiles in delight.*)

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Of course. My magic never fails!

KING: Darling, you have been such a wonderful wife to me. Such a good queen to my people . . . for a long time I have thought to give you a present. (*Glances about worriedly.*)

QUEEN: Oh, King, that is not necessary . . . as long as you tell me you love me!

KING: I love you dearly, but I want to give you something too . . . just some little thing to show I think of you.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Everyone needs a little word now and then from friends and loved ones. (*Waves her wand over box and pulls off cover revealing a gaily decorated Valentine Box.*) Here, Oh King, are small messages of love not only for your Queen but for all your people as well. For they, too, need to know that their King remembers them. (*All rush to the box and remove lid.*)

QUEEN: It is full of messages and cards!

LADY-IN-WAITING: How lovely they are!

KING: I thank you very much. (*Bows low to* FAIRY GODMOTHER.)

QUEEN: And I thank you, so very, very much. Here . . . (*Hands the* FAIRY GODMOTHER *the plant*) I want you to have this. Take it to remember how very, very happy you have made me! (*Kisses the* FAIRY GODMOTHER *who bows and smiles.*)

PAGE (*Who has been running his hands through the Valentines*): But come, let us give these out! (*All nod and begin distributing the Valentines.*)

THE END

A Needle Fights for Freedom

by Esther MacLellan and Catherine V. Schroll

Characters

PEGGY
CONSTANCE
ELIZABETH
ANNE
PRUE
MISTRESS BETSY ROSS
GENERAL WASHINGTON
ROBERT MORRIS
COLONEL ROSS

TIME: *June, 1776.*
SETTING: *Betsy Ross's home in Philadelphia.*
AT RISE: *The girls are seated in a circle. They are busy sewing.*

PEGGY (*Jumping to her feet*): In and out! In and out! Pushing a needle in and out! That's all you do when you're sewing. It's stupid and tiresome!

CONSTANCE: Why Peggy, sewing isn't stupid at all. My mother says every lady should be able to sew.

ELIZABETH: So does mine.

ANNE: There! I've pricked my finger again! Ow! Mean old needle!

PRUE: My grandmother says we should be glad that Mistress Betsy Ross is teaching us to sew.

PEGGY: Well, I'm not glad. I'm tired of sitting still. I wish I were a boy. Then I'd go to war.

PRUE: You're not big enough.

PEGGY: I'm big enough to play a drum. (*Marches up and down pretending to beat a drum*)

ANNE: It would be more fun than sewing.

PEGGY: Of course it would. And you'd be helping your country, too. My papa says that everybody should fight for freedom. How can you fight for freedom with a needle? (*Enter* BETSY ROSS)

BETSY ROSS: Maybe you can't fight with a needle, Peggy, and maybe you can.

PEGGY: Fight with a needle? How would a needle have helped our soldiers at Bunker Hill?

BETSY ROSS: By making them warm clothes, of course. The British laugh at the rags some of our boys must wear. They call them an army of beggars.

PEGGY: But I'm just sewing an old seam. I can't make clothes.

BETSY ROSS: And you never will be able to make clothes unless you first learn on small things. A baby crawls before it walks, you know. Let's see, girls, show me your work. (*Walks around the circle as she speaks*) Very nice, Prue. A little crooked, Anne. Peggy, your stitches are much too large.

PEGGY: I wish they were even larger. Then I'd be finished.

BETSY ROSS: This kind of work only takes longer, Peggy. Now, you must rip out your seam and do it over.

PEGGY: Again?

BETSY ROSS: Again and again, until it's right. (*She exits left.*)

CONSTANCE: That's a shame, Peggy.

PEGGY (*Sighing*): I suppose it's my own fault. I did hurry.

PRUE: Those great big stitches of yours would pull out in a minute.

PEGGY: Oh dear! If I were only helping in the fight for freedom instead of just sewing. How I would love to do something for General Washington, something he really needed.

ELIZABETH: Cheer up, Peggy. Maybe you can sew him a shirt when you learn to make smaller stitches. (*Girls laugh.*)

PEGGY: A shirt! I mean something for *America.* (*Sound of knocking off stage*)

PRUE: Shall I answer the door?

ANNE: Why not? Mistress Ross is busy in the kitchen.

PEGGY: If it's a poor begger, I'll gladly give him my needle. (PRUE *goes to door, right. Enter* GENERAL WASHINGTON, ROBERT MORRIS, *and* COLONEL ROSS)

WASHINGTON: Is this the home of Mistress Betsy Ross?

PRUE (*Curtsying*): Yes, sir.

PEGGY (*Rising*): Anne! Anne! That's General Washington!

ANNE: You must be mistaken, Peggy.

PEGGY: Indeed I am not! (*To* WASHINGTON) Oh, sir, you *are* General Washington, aren't you?

WASHINGTON (*Bowing*): I am, my little maid. (*Other gentlemen sit.*)

PEGGY: But what are you doing *here*, sir? I thought you were busy. . . .

WASHINGTON (*Smiling*): I am busy.

PEGGY: Excuse me, sir, I didn't mean you weren't. But I meant busy galloping at the head of the army.

WASHINGTON: We don't gallop all the time, my dear.

MR. MORRIS: Come, come, child. Where is Mistress Ross?

CONSTANCE: I'll get her, sir. (*Exits left*)

MR. MORRIS (*To* WASHINGTON): Are you sure that Mistress Ross will be able to do what we want?

WASHINGTON: I've heard that she is a fine needlewoman.

ELIZABETH: Oh, sir, she is. Mistress Ross sews better than anyone in Philadelphia.

COLONEL ROSS: Then she's the lady we want to meet. (*Enter* BETSY ROSS, *followed by* CONSTANCE)

BETSY ROSS (*Curtsying*): General Washington! I am honored, sir What can I do for you?

WASHINGTON: Mistress Ross, this is Mr. Robert Morris and Colonel Ross.

MR. MORRIS (*Bowing*): Your servant, Ma'am.

COLONEL ROSS (*Bowing*): A pleasure, Ma'am.

WASHINGTON: We have come to ask you to do something important, Mistress Ross, something for your country.

PEGGY: Is Mistress Ross to fight, sir? Is she to be in the *army?*

ELIZABETH: Peggy, be quiet, do. General Washington will be angry.

WASHINGTON: Angry? No, not I. I have a liking for little maids. But Peggy, there are other ways to serve your country than by fighting. Mistress Ross can help us with her needle.

COLONEL ROSS: Madam, our country needs a flag.

MR. MORRIS: Now that we are fighting England, we can no longer use the English flag that once we loved so well.

COLONEL ROSS: We must have a flag of our own, one that will stir the hearts of all our citizens.

WASHINGTON: Exactly. Some of our men march under the pine tree of Massachusetts . . .

MR. MORRIS: Others under the banner of a rattlesnake, divided into thirteen parts.

WASHINGTON: We need *one* flag, one for everybody. A flag which will make our people realize that they are no more a part of old England, but of a new country.

MR. MORRIS: And a free country, General Washington, where all men are joined together under one great flag.

BETSY ROSS: I shall do my best, gentlemen.

WASHINGTON: I am sure of it. These are our plans. (*Takes paper from his pocket*) What do you think of this?

BETSY ROSS: Beautiful, General Washington. I love the colors: red, white and blue.

MR. MORRIS: A stripe and a star for each of the thirteen colonies.

BETSY ROSS (*Pointing to plan*): This is the six-pointed star of the old flag. Let's have one of our own, a new star for our new country. What do you say to a five-pointed star?

WASHINGTON: Would it be difficult to make?

BETSY ROSS: Not in the least, sir. Peggy, your seam, my child.

(*She pretends to cut, and then holds up a star*) How do you like it, General Washington?

WASHINGTON (*Rising*): Very much. Mistress Ross, we will leave the plan with you.

BETSY ROSS: I shall start at once.

WASHINGTON: Good!

MR. MORRIS: Work fast, Mistress Ross. Our country needs its flag.

WASHINGTON: It does indeed. Farewell, Mistress Ross. (*To girls*) Goodbye, my dears. If you learn to sew as well as your good teacher, perhaps one day your needles may serve our country, too.

BETSY ROSS (*Curtsying*): Goodbye, gentlemen. (GENERAL WASHINGTON, MR. MORRIS *and* COLONEL ROSS *exit right.*)

PEGGY: To think my ugly old seam would be changed into a star! The first star of our new flag!

ELIZABETH: Perhaps you'll feel differently about sewing now, Peggy.

PRUE: You see that in serving your country a needle can be just as important as a drumstick.

CONSTANCE (*Waving her sewing*): And I say that the needle that makes a flag is a needle that fights for freedom!

PEGGY (*Slowly*): Well, I suppose you're right, Constance, though I still think that beating a drum is lots more exciting. (*Throws arms around* BETSY ROSS) Even if I'm not very good at sewing, I'm terribly proud of my teacher.

BETSY ROSS: Thank you, Peggy. Sewing class is over, girls. On with your bonnets. My other work must be put aside. Now, this very minute, I start . . . I start to make our first American flag!

THE END

Washington's Sacrifice

by Helen M. Roberts

Characters

GEORGE WASHINGTON
MARTHA WASHINGTON
NELLIE CUSTIS, *the adopted granddaughter*
(GEORGE) WASHINGTON CUSTIS, *Young Washington*
TOBIAS LEAR, *Washington's secretary and the children's tutor*
CHARLES THOMPSON, *secretary of the Continental Congress*

SETTING: *Room at Mount Vernon, April 1789. A long dining table is at left. A fireplace is at right, with rocker near it. Other chairs are near the table.*

AT RISE: GENERAL WASHINGTON *is seen reading a newspaper. Another stack of papers is on the table beside him at the end nearest the fire. At the other end of the table* TOBIAS LEAR *is writing, with papers scattered around him.* MARTHA WASHINGTON *is sitting in the rocker, mending. Little* NELLIE CUSTIS *is sitting at* WASHINGTON'S *feet trying to embroider, while her brother,* YOUNG WASHINGTON *is in front of fireplace, trying to mend a broken wheel.*

NELLIE (*Putting her hand against* WASHINGTON'S *knee*): Grandfather! . . . Grandfather!

WASHINGTON (*Looking up*): What is it, Nellie?

NELLIE: I don't think you've even noticed the warm sunshine today. The leaves are coming out . . . and a few of the bulbs are in bloom in the garden.

YOUNG WASHINGTON (*Excitedly*): The paint is almost dry on my wagon. And the new colt is running around near his mother.

WASHINGTON (*Sighing*): You're right, children! Spring *is* here! April 1789 . . . and I've hardly noticed it.

MARTHA: You've been too busy, George! . . . And you don't look very happy just now.

WASHINGTON (*Getting up and going over to* MARTHA): Happy, Patsy? These are the happiest days of my life! (*Rests his hand on her shoulder.*)

MARTHA: It's so good to have you home again at Mount Vernon . . . after all those years you were gone.

NELLIE: You'll *always* be here with us, won't you, Grandfather?

WASHINGTON: I hope so, dear! If only . . .

MARTHA: If only what?

WASHINGTON (*Going back to table and picking up newspapers*): These papers! One after another demanding that I be President.

MARTHA (*Gently*): No one else could handle the office half so well.

WASHINGTON: But I'm tired, Patsy! . . . Tired of public life! Mount Vernon is home to me . . . the most beautiful spot in the whole world. I would rather be just Farmer Washington for the rest of my life. (*Sits down wearily*) Surely after all the years I devoted to my country I can have a little peace and quiet!

YOUNG WASHINGTON (*Getting up and bringing his wheel to* WASHINGTON'S *lap*): I can't mend it, Grandfather!

WASHINGTON: We'll have to take it out to the workshop!

YOUNG WASHINGTON: Grandfather! What does it mean . . . President? Is it bigger than General? Do you have to fight again?

WASHINGTON (*Smiling*): Well, lad! It's hard to explain. The general leads the armies in war. The president will lead a new nation in the ways of peace.

YOUNG WASHINGTON: Oh, I think fighting's lots more fun!

WASHINGTON (*Kindly*): It's never fun, lad!

NELLIE: Why don't you want to be President, Grandfather . . . if all the people de—demand it?

WASHINGTON: The president, Nellie, is the leader of the people. But he is their servant, too.

NELLIE: Would you live in Washington if you were President?

WASHINGTON: Yes, Nellie! We'd live in Washington! We wouldn't see Mount Vernon for months at a time.

NELLIE (*Eagerly*): Oh! I could be a great lady then. (*Glancing at* MARTHA) Maybe I wouldn't need to practice on the harpsichord!

MARTHA (*Sternly*): Don't get any such ideas in your head, Nellie! You'll have to practice wherever you are.

NELLIE: Aw . . . But Grandmother!

YOUNG WASHINGTON: Grandfather! Could I take my young colt to Washington?

WASHINGTON: I'm afraid not! He needs plenty of room to run! But listen, children! Why do you talk as if we were going?

NELLIE (*Wisely*): Mr. Lear said they were holding 'lections in South Carolina and Georgia, and that they were sure to choose *you!*

WASHINGTON (*Glumly*): That's what I'm afraid of. (*To* LEAR) Tobias! You wrote those letters, didn't you? You explained that I felt unequal to the responsibilities, and that it would be a great sacrifice to leave here?

LEAR: Oh, yes, General Washington! All your friends realize your intense love for peaceful Mount Vernon. But still . . . they say *you* are the only man able to hold the country together. The only man able to unite the states under the new Constitution.

WASHINGTON (*Covering his face with his hands*): They make it harder and harder!

NELLIE (*Pulling one hand away from his face*): We'll help you, Grandfather!

YOUNG WASHINGTON: I'll help, too! But I don't want to leave my colt . . . much!

WASHINGTON: Bless your hearts! The election returns are not in yet! Maybe we won't have to go to Washington!

LEAR: I wouldn't count on that, sir! One state after another is voting for you with great enthusiasm.

WASHINGTON (*Turning to* MARTHA): Patsy! It would mean a great sacrifice for you! . . . Public life . . . new responsibilities . . .

MARTHA: Whatever you decide, my dear, is always wisest, I know.

WASHINGTON (*Going over to her chair*): What a comfort you are, Patsy! (*Strokes her hair*) Always to be depended on!

YOUNG WASHINGTON (*Reaching for his hand*): Please come and help me mend my wheel! And see how much the colt has grown, Grandfather!

NELLIE: And to see the pussy-willows, too, with their soft, furry coats.

WASHINGTON (*Taking each child by the hand*): That's a sensible thing to do, children. I know every tree, every plant, every animal, on this lovely place! Why, Washington, I was no bigger than you are now when I used to swing from the elm branches and swim in the river.

YOUNG WASHINGTON (*Laughing*): Maybe you can still do it, Grandfather.

WASHINGTON (*As the children swing his hands eagerly*): No, I'm too old for such pranks!

NELLIE (*Proudly*): But you're the best rider in . . . in all the world.

YOUNG WASHINGTON: And *I'm* going to be the next best. (*Clutching his wheel tightly*) Hurry, Grandfather! The colt has such wobbly legs! He looks so funny. (*They start toward the door.*) But he's wonderful.

NELLIE (*Looking out window*): Look out there! Someone's coming.

YOUNG WASHINGTON (*Observing critically*): He's ridden his horse too fast! It's all lathery.

WASHINGTON: A messenger! (*Peers out*) Tobias! Go and meet him! (TOBIAS *starts out*) Unless I'm mistaken he's the bearer of important news.

YOUNG WASHINGTON: Can't we go out to the stable anyway?

WASHINGTON: You children may go. . . . That is, unless you want to wait to hear the news. (*He sits down in his chair with his hand against his forehead.*)

NELLIE: *I* want to hear the news. (*Sits down near* WASHINGTON.)

YOUNG WASHINGTON (*Looking out window*): Well . . . I'd rather go out! But my wheel can wait, I guess! There must be very important news for the man to ride a good horse so hard.

MARTHA (*Getting up and going over to* WASHINGTON): My dear! (*Puts her hand on his shoulder*) On your decision rests the welfare of a great people.

WASHINGTON (*Taking her hand a moment*): God bless you, Patsy! (TOBIAS LEAR *enters, stepping aside to let* CHARLES THOMPSON *enter.* WASHINGTON *gets to his feet, straight and tall.* MR. THOMPSON *advances a few steps, then bows.*)

THOMPSON (*With heartfelt emotion*): General Washington! You, the most "illustrious soldier and the most venerated citizen of your country, are unanimously elected President of the United States!"

WASHINGTON (*Takes a step or two forward, bows his head, then lifts it high*): "I am so much affected by this fresh proof of my country's esteem and confidence, that silence can best explain my gratitude. I wish that there may be no reason for regretting the choice, for, indeed, all I can promise is only to accomplish that which can be done by an honest zeal."

THOMPSON (*Shaking* WASHINGTON'S *hand*): It is the nation I would congratulate, sir. And now, may I add, the sooner you can start back with me, the better pleased will be all who await your coming.

WASHINGTON: Then I am ready now, Mr. Thompson. "For me, it is the end of domestic felicity." No man liveth to himself alone. The call to serve one's fellowmen must needs outweigh all personal preference. (*Curtain.*)

THE END

The Boy Who Could Not Tell a Lie

by Alice Very

Characters

MRS. MARY WASHINGTON, *George's mother*
GEORGE WASHINGTON, *about six years old*
AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON, *George's father*
ROBIN, DICKY, HARRY, BILLY } *George's playmates*
LUCINDA, *a maid*
OTHER SERVANTS

SCENE 1

SETTING: *A parlor in the Washington home.*

AT RISE: MRS. WASHINGTON *is seated at an embroidery stand on which is a cloth with the Washington arms outlined, which she stitches during pauses.* GEORGE *sits on a footstool before her.*

MRS. WASHINGTON:
Come, George, I'll braid your hair for you;
Just like your father's, in a queue.
Today's your birthday—six years old!
A little man we must behold.
(*Braids* GEORGE'S *hair and ties it with a bow.*)

GEORGE:
Shall I go out like Papa too,
And make the servants work for you?
MRS. WASHINGTON:
You are a little man, but still
You must obey your father's will,
And, like the servants, you must try
His every wish to satisfy.
GEORGE:
I will try hard to please him, Ma'am,
And show how big and strong I am.
(*Enter* AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON, *with a little hatchet under his arm.* GEORGE *rises and stands attending, but with his eyes on the hatchet.*)
MR. WASHINGTON:
Dear Polly, I am on my way
To oversee the farms today.
I'll mark the borders of my land
And start the work that I have planned,
I'll set the men at pruning trees—
I wish they were as fine as these!
(*Points to orchard outside of window.*)
GEORGE:
Dear Papa, you would make more money
By raising sugar-cane and honey.
MR. WASHINGTON:
I thank you, George, for your advice,
But sugar-cane will not stand ice.
However, since you've grown so bright
I hope you soon will learn to write.
GEORGE:
Papa, to tell the truth, indeed
I do not like to write or read.
I'd rather go with you to ride
Than study tiresome books inside.

MR. WASHINGTON:
My son, no race was ever won
By men who could not see to run,
And he who cannot read or write
Loses another kind of sight.

GEORGE:
I love to race; it's lots of fun,
For I win every race I run;
And if it helps me to run better
I'll try to study every letter.

MR. WASHINGTON:
A very good idea, my son,
Worthy the name of Washington,
For when improvement is your aim
You'll soon be proud to write your name.
But you may leave your books today;
It is your birthday; go and play.
And that you may be busy too,
Here is a useful gift for you.
(*Presenting hatchet.*)

GEORGE:
Oh, Papa, now I can go out
And play I am an Indian scout!

MRS. WASHINGTON: Your duty, George—have you forgot?

GEORGE (*Bowing to father*): No, Ma'am—I thank you, Sir—I've not. (MR. WASHINGTON *pats* GEORGE'S *head.*)

CURTAIN

* * *

SCENE 2

SETTING: *The same; later in the day.*

AT RISE: *Noise of war-whoops off stage.* GEORGE, ROBIN, DICKY, *Harry, and Billy run in, feathers stuck in hair, faces streaked with paint, George holding hatchet, others bows and arrows.*

Robin: Who'll be the Chief?
Dicky: Let me!
Harry: Let me.
Billy: I'll be the Chief.
George: We can't all be.
Robin: Let's see, who's biggest?
Dicky: George, of course.
Harry: He's strong!
Billy: And he can ride a horse!
Robin: You be the chief!
George: Not me!
Robin: Yes, you!
Dicky: You always know just what to do.
Harry: You always know just how to talk.
Billy: Besides, you have the tomahawk.
George:
Come on, then, Indians, follow me!
Let's hide, each one behind a tree.
If any white man dares attack
I'll show him how this axe can hack!
(*Brandishes hatchet. All hide behind furniture. Noise outside.* Augustine Washington *enters, stamping and shouting.*)
Mr. Washington:
Where is the rascal? Where is he?
Who chopped my favorite cherry tree?
(*Goes through inner door, his voice still heard off.*)
Polly!
Robin: Oh, George!
Dicky: What will you do?
Harry: You'd better run!
Billy: We'll go with you!

GEORGE:
Not I! D'you think I'd run away?
I'm not a coward! I will stay.
ROBIN: Then we'll stay with you.
DICKY: We'll not tell.
HARRY: We'll say—
BILLY: We don't remember well.
(*Enter* MR. WASHINGTON, MRS. WASHINGTON, LUCINDA, *carrying a bundle of switches, and* SERVANTS.)
MR. WASHINGTON (*Pointing out window*):
What careless wretch—what wicked axe
Has given that tree those cruel hacks?
Answer me, George, if you know who
Ruined my tree?—George, was it you?
GEORGE:
There's nobody to blame but me.
I am the one who cut your tree.
I did it, Pa; I don't know why.
You know I cannot tell a lie.
MR. WASHINGTON: Perhaps you only meant to scratch it.
GEORGE: No, Sir, I chopped it with my hatchet.
MRS. WASHINGTON:
Oh, George, how could you?
Father's trees!
Lucinda, bring the switches, please!
MR. WASHINGTON:
No, Polly, let the boy alone!
No tree, nor anything I own
Can equal in a father's eye
A boy who cannot tell a lie!
(*Embraces* GEORGE.)

THE END

St. Patrick and the Last Snake in Ireland

by Lavinia R. Davis

Characters

ST. PATRICK, *one of the larger children*	
TIM MIKE SEAN BRIDGET MAUREEN	*Irish children*
1ST SPIDER 2ND SPIDER	*two very small children*
1ST SNAKE	
2ND SNAKE	
3RD SNAKE	
4TH SNAKE	
SMALLEST SNAKE IN IRELAND	

SCENE 1

SETTING: *A wooded spot near the coast of Ireland.*
TIME: *The past, when snakes walked the earth.*
AT RISE: *Children come on laughing and playing ball.*

MAUREEN: Look, Bridget! 'Tis shamrock, to be sure!

BRIDGET: And a wild rose, as sure as I'm alive.

SEAN (*Picking quickly*): Let's get a big bunch to take home to grand-dad.

CHILDREN: Oh, let's. Goody. I'll get a big bunch before you do.

(*Children are picking busily when* FIRST SNAKE *enters. Snakes move very smoothly, quietly, occasionally making little hissing sounds. Children who play the snakes should not attempt crawling, but should walk with smooth, silent, gliding steps.*)

TIM (*Suddenly seeing snake*): Oh! A snake. Run, Bridget! Run, Michael. All of you!

MIKE: Oh, the Saints preserve us. Snakes! (*As all the snakes come gliding on from the direction of the rocks, the children run off, crying and terrified.*)

ST. PATRICK (*Enters from opposite side as the children leave. He walks slowly, talking to himself, and at first not noticing the snakes who writhe and glide to his right*): Surely, now, and my old ears are after playing me tricks. 'Twas the voices of children now I thought I heard. Frightened children calling on the saints.

MIKE (*Rushing on stage and throwing himself around* ST. PATRICK'S *knees*): Oh, those snakes. Save us from those awful, awful snakes. They frightened us! (*The snakes avoid* ST. PATRICK, *but glide and hiss toward* MIKE *in a taunting manner.*)

ST. PATRICK (*Drawing himself up and pushing* MIKE *back of him*): Oh, so it's snakes, is it? And scaring a broth of a boy like yourself, Mike O'Connell. Patrick will soon settle that. (*He gives* MIKE *a little pat, and the boy runs off stage calling, "Mother, Mother!"*) And now what have you to say for yourselves? Scaring the children, is it? You bad, bold serpents. (*Snakes writhe and glide toward* ST. PATRICK *and then away again. Only the very smallest snake is evidently ashamed of himself and hides behind one of the rocks, hidden from* ST. PATRICK *but visible to the audience. He curls up, with his head hidden, mutely embarrassed and contrite.*) Here I've been chasing out snakes from Lough Swilly to Bantry Bay and then I come upon you spalpeens. Begone! Off with you! Begone, I say! All Ireland shall be rid of snakes. (ST. PATRICK *advances with his staff, chasing out the snakes. They approach him, hissing and writhing, and then gradu-*

ally turn tails and sneak out over the rocks, that is, all except the SMALLEST SNAKE, *who lies hidden and asleep throughout.)*

ST. PATRICK (*Chanting*):

Snakes from Longford, snakes from Clare,
Threaten Patrick, if you dare;
Snakes, begone! Into the sea!
Emerald Ireland shall be free!

Free of serpents, writhing, creeping;
You can't set our children weeping.
Out upon you! Pox and BOO!
Ireland shall be rid of YOU!

(*Throughout his chant* ST. PATRICK *has been waving and threatening away the snakes with his staff. At the very last words the last snake, except for the small hidden one, glides away over the rocks;* ST. PATRICK *ends up his chant with a pounce in the direction of the snakes.* ST. PATRICK *turns back to centre stage.*) Well, they're gone, and bad cess to 'em. Making the children cry, indeed! (ST. PATRICK *stretches wearily.*) 'Tis more work clearing all Ireland of snakes than most people credit. 'Tis the good rest I'm needing. (*He sits down under one of the trees and goes through all the gestures of going to sleep. Finally, amid yawns*) Sure, saint or sinner needs a good sleep at the end of the long day's toil. Ridding a country of snakes—is a tiring—business. (*With the last slow words he is evidently asleep and begins to snore.*)

1ST SPIDER (*Coming on stage with little running steps*): Ha! Ha! Ha! I'll bite his toes.

2ND SPIDER (*Running on right after* 1ST SPIDER): Ho! Ho! Ho! I'll bite his nose. (1ST SPIDER *runs up to* ST. PATRICK'S *sleeping form and either lets down toy spider over his feet, or pinches them.* ST. PATRICK *wiggles uneasily and slaps in his sleep, muttering.*)

1ST SPIDER (*Darting away and then coming back to bite some more*): Ha! Ha! Ha! He slaps in vain.

2ND SPIDER (*Suiting the action to the words*): We will bite and bite again!

ST. PATRICK (*Yawning and slapping*): Ah, is there no rest to be found in Ireland?

SMALLEST SNAKE (*Getting up from behind rocks*):
Who are these who make such noise?
Men or varmints, girls or boys?

SPIDERS (*Unaware of snake and still annoying poor* ST. PATRICK):
We will bite and we will tease.
We will spoil this person's ease.

SMALLEST SNAKE (*Coming up from behind rocks and gliding threateningly toward spiders*):
Away, away, you biting pest!
I shall guard St. Patrick's rest.

(SMALLEST SNAKE *drives away spiders, who go off stage with little shrieks and cries.* ST. PATRICK *snores audibly and cheerfully while the* SMALLEST SNAKE *curls up at his feet. Finally, with much yawning and arm-stretching,* ST. PATRICK *wakes up, not at first noticing snake.*)

ST. PATRICK: Ah, 'twas the good rest I had after those small spiders stopped biting me old flesh. (*He suddenly sees* SMALLEST SNAKE.) And what are you doing here; tell me that, now? Didn't I tell all the snakes to leave Ireland?

SMALLEST SNAKE: But 'tis the very small, harmless snake I am, your honor. (SPIDERS *start to run out on stage and then, seeing snake is still there, run away again with crys of*—)
The snake! The snake! He still lies there.
Lest he catch us both beware!

ST. PATRICK: Oh, and so that's how it is, is it? So you were the lad that protected my sleep.

SMALLEST SNAKE: Yes, your honor. Spiders make a very good breakfast for a hungry snake.

ST. PATRICK: Oh, they do, do they? Well, we must put our minds on that. What should I do now with a small, harmless snake like yourself? (*He prods the* SMALLEST SNAKE *gently with his staff.*) Should I send you away over the rocks or over the sea, or just magic you away out of Ireland entirely?

SMALLEST SNAKE (*Pitifully*): Oh, please not out of Ireland, your honor. Please not. Ireland is such a green and pleasant land. So very beautiful and green. I could lie still in the grass all day just looking at it, if it were not for the birds and beasts who would catch me.

ST. PATRICK (*Scratching head*): Well, 'tis true I owe you something. 'Twas yourself now guarded my rest, so I think I'll guard yours.

SMALLEST SNAKE: Oh, please, oh, please.

ST. PATRICK: Well, come, then, and we'll change this homely brown coat of yours so that neither beast nor bird shall see you when you take your rest on Ireland's velvet green. A bath in the sea will do the trick. (ST. PATRICK *goes off stage leading the snake toward the sea. As he leaves, the children come back. They are still frightened about the snakes. They pick a few flowers timidly whispering about the snakes.*)

MIKE: It was here I saw that good man.

BRIDGET: And what was it he said to you, Mike O'Connell?

MIKE: He said—he said—(*Before he can finish* ST. PATRICK *comes back, leading the* SMALLEST SNAKE, *who is now dressed in a green costume.*)

CHILDREN: Why, there he is! And 'tis the snake he has with him! (*They start to run away, but stop as* ST. PATRICK *speaks reassuringly.*)

ST. PATRICK: Lord love you, children. This is the last snake in Ireland.

MAUREEN: But won't he hurt us?

ST. PATRICK: Not he. Not till the hills of Tyrone fall straight into the sea. Sure and he's the harmless little snake as green as Ireland itself. Sure, he's the useful little body that will rid the island of spiders. (*Children form a ring around* ST. PATRICK *and the* SMALLEST SNAKE, *dancing and singing.*)

CHILDREN:
St. Patrick's rid this land of snakes,
Except this lad in green, O.

And he's as green as Irish sod,
And never would be mean, O!

So there's rest for St. Patrick
And rest for us all,

For the good Saint shall help us
Until the skies fall!

THE END

Flibber Turns the Tables

by Lee Knight

Characters

FLIBBER, *a forgetful rabbit*
JOHN, KATHERINE, THEODORE — *three neighbor rabbits*

SETTING: *Flibber's front yard. Upstage center is a "house" with a sign: Flibber—His House.*

AT RISE: FLIBBER *is setting up a child's blackboard beside the doorway to his house.* JOHN, KATHERINE *and* THEODORE *enter from left and cluster around* FLIBBER *as they speak.*

JOHN: What's that you're doing?

KATHERINE: Yes, what's that you're doing, Flibber?

THEODORE (*He speaks a little like a cry-baby*): What is it? What *is* it?

FLIBBER (*Stopping to face them*): What am I doing? (*Scratches his ears*) I declare I've forgotten. Now, what *was* I doing? I wasn't washing, was I?

JOHN: No, it didn't look as though you were washing, Flibber.

KATHERINE: It certainly didn't look like washing, Flibber.

THEODORE: Not like washing at all.

FLIBBER: Now let me think. Maybe I was cleaning house. Did it look as though I were cleaning house?

JOHN: No, it didn't look as though you were cleaning house.

KATHERINE: No, it didn't look that way at all.

THEODORE: No, it didn't. No, it didn't.

FLIBBER: Well, what *did* it look as though I was doing, if you don't mind saying?

JOHN: It looked as though you were putting up that blackboard.

KATHERINE: Yes, that's the way it looked—as though you were putting up that blackboard.

THEODORE: Yes sir, putting up the blackboard.

FLIBBER: Well, why didn't you say so before? (*Fussing with blackboard*) The idea of trying to make me think I was cleaning house.

JOHN: We didn't try to make you think you were cleaning house. That was your idea.

KATHERINE: Why don't you keep your mind on what you're doing, Flibber? Then you'd know.

THEODORE: Then you'd surely know.

FLIBBER: That's it. That's what I was doing, don't you see? (*Adjusts board and turns to them*) I'm putting up a blackboard to remind me. That way I'll know. I'll just put down what I want to remember, like what day it is or what I'm doing. Then I'll always know. Whatever it says, that's what I'll do.

JOHN: But why couldn't you just put your mind on it and be done with it?

KATHERINE: Yes, why don't you just put your mind on it instead? It would be lots easier.

THEODORE: Yes, easier and easier.

FLIBBER: Why should I put my mind on things when I can just write them on the blackboard? That way I can put my mind on something else. My mind wouldn't like it if it had to remember everything. I'll just write it down and remember. (*Pauses to scratch his ear*) Now what was I going to do? Was I going to the store, do you know?

JOHN: No, you weren't going to the store. You were going to write on the blackboard.

KATHERINE: Yes, you were going to write on the blackboard. You were going to write something down.

THEODORE: Write it down. Write it down *now.*

FLIBBER (*Picks up chalk, turns back, thinking*): Now what was it I wanted to write down? What *was* it? Let me think. (*Scratches his ears and gives up*) Now you've made me forget. You ask me all these silly questions and then I forget. (*Sits down sourly before his doorway*) I'll just have to wait until I think of it again.

JOHN: Maybe you were going to write your shopping list. Maybe you were going to write down "carrots."

KATHERINE: Maybe you were going to write down "carrots and candy." It's almost Easter; maybe you were going to write down "Easter eggs."

THEODORE: Easter eggs! (*Dances excitedly*) Easter eggs. Easter eggs.

FLIBBER (*Pleased. Gets up*): That's it! I was going to write down Easter so I wouldn't forget. Last year I didn't get around until the Fourth of July. (*Looks about bewildered*) Now, let me see, where was I going to write it down?

JOHN: You said on the blackboard. Where else would you write it?

KATHERINE: You just don't keep your mind on anything. Write it on the blackboard.

THEODORE: On the blackboard, silly.

FLIBBER (*Goes to board*): That's right. I forgot about the blackboard. (*Prints on the board the word EASTER in large, plain letters.*) That's what comes of having so many rabbits around all the time. A fellow can't do his thinking with so many around. Now go home while I rest. (*Goes into house*)

JOHN: I wonder what he'd do if we changed the date. We ought to change it just for fun. Maybe it would teach him to keep his mind on what he's doing instead of trusting to a blackboard.

KATHERINE (*Going to board*): Let's mark it Fourth of July and see if he knows the difference. Maybe it will teach him a real lesson. We'll hide and see.

THEODORE: Hide and see, hide and see, hide and see. (*They crouch at the side of the rabbit house nearest the blackboard, peeping out as* FLIBBER *comes out, eating a carrot.*)

FLIBBER (*Scratching his ear*): Well, well, now what was I going to remember? Now let me see. I was going to eat my lunch. (*Starts back in, sees carrot and turns back*) No, that wasn't it. I just ate my lunch. Maybe I was going to bed. (*Takes out a big pocket watch*) No, it's only afternoon. Maybe I was going to—(*Catches sight of blackboard*) That's it. I was going to remember to look at the blackboard. (*Goes up and reads it*) The Fourth of July. My goodness! I wouldn't have believed it. My goodness, the Fourth of July. (*Rushes into house.* JOHN *steals out and changes sign to read CHRISTMAS.* FLIBBER *returns with a striped Fourth of July hat and drum. He marches around in a circle singing "Yankee Doodle" and drumming, until he catches sight of the sign again.*) My lands, it's not the Fourth of July. It's Christmas. Whatever made me think it was the Fourth of July? It's lucky I've this board to remind me. (*Hurries into house and comes out wearing a Santa hat complete with cotton beard and holes for ears. Jingles bells and begins to sing "Jingle Bells." In the meantime, the sign has been changed to read EASTER again.*) What am I thinking of? Here it is Christmas and I haven't even written to Santa Claus—or have I? (*Scratches ear*) I can't seem to remember. Maybe I wrote it down somewhere. Where *was* it I was going to write things like that down? Was it— (JOHN, KATHERINE, *and* THEODORE *re-appear, giggling.*) Do you know where it was that I was going to write things down?

JOHN (*Laughing and winking*): Maybe you wrote it on a piece of rock and threw it away.

KATHERINE: Yes, maybe you wrote it on a piece of rock and then forgot and threw it away.

THEODORE (*Motioning as though tossing it a long way off*): Away, way off.

FLIBBER (*Searching the ground*): On a rock, you say. Maybe I did. I don't seem to remember, but then I never did put my mind on anything. (*Gets down on hands and knees*) It doesn't seem to be that, though. How could it be a rock when there aren't any rocks around here? (*Stands up*) Now put your mind on it and think!

JOHN: Maybe you put it on a piece of paper and put it in one of your ears to keep.

KATHERINE: Look in your ears. It might be you put it there instead of your pocket.

THEODORE: Yes, sir, instead of your pocket.

FLIBBER (*Shakes out one ear and then another. Works diligently at his ears, but finds nothing*): There! You see that was a very silly answer. If there had been anything there, I would have found it when I washed my ears last winter.

JOHN (*Standing before him. Seriously*): Why don't you put your mind on it? Think hard. Maybe you wrote it somewhere with chalk.

KATHERINE: Yes, put your mind on it. Think about chalk.

THEODORE: Like this. See—chalk. (*Points to blackboard*)

FLIBBER (*Not noticing at first*): Maybe with chalk. That's it, now that I put my mind on it. I wrote it with chalk. But where would I— (*Sees blackboard*) There. There it is, right before your very eyes. You rabbits are certainly slow to notice things, I'd say. Right before your eyes and you never even saw it. (*Goes over and reads the sign*) Why, it's Easter. (*Hurries to doorway*) Hurry. It's Easter. (*Disappears into house*)

JOHN: He thinks it's Easter today. We'd better change the sign to say "Easter Next Sunday."

KATHERINE: Let's wait and see before we tell him. See what he does.

THEODORE: Wait and see. Wait and see. Wait and see.

FLIBBER (*Rushes past with basket of carrots before they can stop him*): Hurry. It's time to fill the Easter baskets. Go and get your candy before it's too late. (*Rushes off stage and down into front row of audience, offering carrots, while other rabbits try to motion him back.*) Have some Easter candy. Have some Easter candy. Have some Easter candy. (*The first children and teacher or other adult help themselves to be polite. The third child speaks.*)

CHILD: That's not candy, Mr. Easter Rabbit. That's carrots.

FLIBBER (*Surprised*): Why, so it is. (*Goes back up on stage, speaking to other rabbits as he reaches stage.*) Think of that! Those children have been helping themselves to my supper. Don't know the difference between candy and carrots. Even the grownups don't know. I tell you these days it doesn't pay to be an Easter rabbit. Children will eat you out of house and home. (*Goes into house and gets Easter basket and returns still muttering*) I'm lucky to have a mouthful left. The idea! Taking my carrots. (*Exits at rear of stage this time*)

JOHN (*Speaking as he leaves*): It's your own fault. If you'd keep your mind on what you're doing, you wouldn't have passed the carrots.

KATHERINE: That's it. He just won't put his mind on anything.

THEODORE: Not on anything at all.

JOHN (*Changes sign to read EASTER, NEXT SUNDAY*): We'd better stop teasing him. It isn't doing any good. I guess we can't teach him a lesson after all.

KATHERINE: No, I guess we can't. No matter how much trouble he goes to, he just won't do it.

THEODORE (*As they exit*): Just won't, won't, *won't*. (FLIBBER *returns opposite with an empty basket.*)

FLIBBER: Well, that's done. I guess I can do things right when I want to. (*He is just going into his house when he sees the sign. Peers at it; then pulls his ears and jumps up and down with anger.*) Now my candy's all gone and it's not even Easter yet. (*Begins to wail*) My candy. My lovely Easter candy. What shall I do? (*Stops suddenly*) I know what I'll do. It's the only way. I'll just put my mind on it. (*Speaks slowly, thinking*) I'll just put my mind on it. I'll just put my mind—I know. I know what I'll do. (*Disappears inside house. Comes back with curly golden doll wig tucked between his ears and over his forehead. He is wearing a pinafore apron. He covers the sign on the house with one which reads GENEVIEVE—HER HOUSE, and changes the blackboard to read EASTER RABBITS THIS WAY. An arrow points toward his doorway where he sits down, pretending to be asleep, an oversize Easter basket empty before him. The three rabbits enter, tiptoe over, circle about.*)

JOHN: Look, it's a little girl. She thinks it's Easter.

KATHERINE: Yes, look. A little girl who thinks it's Easter.

THEODORE: It's Easter. It's Easter. It's Easter.

JOHN: We'd better give her our candy now. We oughtn't to disappoint her.

KATHERINE: Yes, we'll give her our candy now. (*As they exit*)

THEODORE: Candy! Oh, boy, candy. (*After a pause, they return, tiptoeing, and put in their candy.*)

JOHN (*As they tiptoe away*): There, we've filled her basket.

KATHERINE: Yes, her Easter basket is surely ready now.

THEODORE (*Singing*): We've filled her Easter basket. We've filled her Easter basket. (*They exit.*)

FLIBBER (*Awakening promptly, takes down Genevieve sign and takes off apron*). Why, it's really easy once you keep your mind on what you're doing. It's not hard at all. It's ever so much easier than blackboards. (*Goes into house. Rabbits re-enter.*)

JOHN: Why, where's Genevieve?

KATHERINE: Yes, I wonder where Genevieve is.

THEODORE (*Dancing in a circle*): Genevieve! Genevieve! Genevieve!

FLIBBER (*Reappearing in doorway with wig askew and Easter basket*): Genevieve had to leave. She filled her Easter basket and then she left. Maybe she went to play some tricks on people who play tricks on other people. (*Takes down blackboard and gives it to* JOHN) Here, maybe you'll need this worse than I do. Remind you to get some more Easter candy. (*Goes into house as they leave. Reappears in doorway*) It won't be hard. Just put your mind on it and you'll think of a way to get more candy. Just put your mind on it, kiddies. (*Disappears*)

JOHN (*Laughing*): Well, well, what do you think of that. Flibber has learned to put his mind on things.

KATHERINE: Yes, and he taught us to think before we play any tricks.

THEODORE (*Tagging behind as they leave. Begins to wail*): I don't care about learning a lesson. I want SOME EASTER CANDY!

THE END

The Bunnyland Brigade

by Claribel Spamer

Characters

LONGEARS	LUCKYFOOT
COTTONTAIL	TRIPTOES
VELVETFUR	MISTRESS HEN
PINKNOSE	DANNY DWARF

SETTING: *Bunnyland.*

AT RISE: BUNNIES, LONGEARS *leading, and* TRIPTOES *bringing up the rear, march in from left. Each* BUNNY *carries a basket on his right arm. They parade back and forth twice to tune of "Onward Christian Soldiers." As they are ending their march,* TRIPTOES *stumbles in center of stage and falls flat.*

LONGEARS (*In disgust*): Clumsy! You're always falling.

COTTONTAIL (*Assisting him to his feet*): If you aren't more careful, you will have to resign from the Bunnyland Brigade. Remember how important our work is. But for us, Easter Bunny could never get enough eggs collected and painted for the children each Easter. (TRIPTOES *nods forlornly.*)

TRIPTOES: I know. (*Looking at his feet*) But I guess my feet are just too big.

PINKNOSE: Nonsense. All bunnies have big feet. The rest of us get along all right.

TRIPTOES (*Suddenly lurching as* COTTONTAIL *lets go of him*): Oh dear! I must have sprained my ankle.

LUCKYFOOT: A fine time to do that!

COTTONTAIL (*Sympathetically*): Here, let me help you over to that stump. (*Aided by* COTTONTAIL, TRIPTOES *hobbles to stump, sits on it, and rubs his ankle.*)

LONGEARS: Hmm. It *does* look swollen. (BUNNIES *gather around and look at it.*)

PINKNOSE: Well, I guess that lets you out, Triptoes. There isn't time to wait for your foot to heal. We've got to get the eggs *now*. Easter is nearly here.

LONGEARS: I guess you'd better write Easter Bunny your resignation.

TRIPTOES (*Angrily*): I will not! Not until I have to! I'll get my share of eggs somehow, and I'll see that they are colored, too!

PINKNOSE: Well, I don't see how—but it's up to you. They won't just come rolling up to that stump, you know. But the rest of us must get busy. Come on, Luckyfoot. I know where there's a hen-house big enough to fill both our baskets. (BUNNIES *exit left and right carrying their baskets.* TRIPTOES *sighs, and puts elbow on knee, chin in hand, dejectedly.*)

TRIPTOES: Oh dear! Mamma and Papa would never forgive me if I have to resign from the Bunnyland Brigade! Whatever shall I do? (*Thinks*) Maybe I could hobble out to Farmer Jones' hen coop. (*Gets up and tries to walk. Drops back to stump.*) Ouch! Goodness, it's no use. (*A bird calls offstage at left; an answering call is heard offstage at right. Brightening*) That gives me an idea! I'll pretend I'm a rooster. (*Cockadoodledoos like a rooster.* MISTRESS HEN *flutters in from left. She carries a basket in her hand.*)

MISTRESS HEN (*Looking about*): Mercy, I thought I heard Strutter calling me, but I don't see him. (*To* TRIPTOES) Have *you* seen him?

TRIPTOES: Who's Strutter?

MISTRESS HEN: My husband. Mister Strutter Rooster.

TRIPTOES: Oh. No, I haven't. But that wasn't he; it was I.

MISTRESS HEN: *You?* But surely rabbits don't crow!

TRIPTOES: I had to do it. You see, I am in trouble, and I need your help.

MISTRESS HEN: Mercy, whatever could *I* do for you?

TRIPTOES: It is almost Easter and all the bunnies of the Bunnyland Brigade have gone to get eggs to take to the children. I can't go because I hurt my foot.

MISTRESS HEN (*Glancing nervously at basket*): Well, what do you expect me to do about it?

TRIPTOES: Surely you've some eggs to spare. Couldn't you give me some?

MISTRESS HEN: Well, my basket *is* filled with eggs—but they belong to Miss Mary. After all, it is Miss Mary who feeds me and who keeps my house locked from the wolves. (*Thoughtfully*) Such a fine hen-house, too!

TRIPTOES: Miss Mary wouldn't mind. She wouldn't want the children disappointed on Easter morning. Remember, we of Bunnyland are Easter Bunny's true helpers.

MISTRESS HEN (*Slowly*): Well—I guess you are right. Miss Mary loves children. (*Impulsively*) Here, you may have the whole basket! (*Sets it on ground at* TRIPTOES' *feet. The eggs in it cannot be seen by audience.*)

TRIPTOES (*Clapping*): Oh thank you, thank you! You are *very* kind.

MISTRESS HEN: It's nothing. It is the least I can do. But now I must hurry home to lay more eggs. (*Exits at right, clucking as she goes.*)

TRIPTOES: How good of her! (*Leans over to look into basket*) A whole dozen! Now if I can manage to get them painted—

VELVETFUR (*Hurrying in from left*): I've *my* eggs; now I must paint them. (*To* TRIPTOES) If anyone asks for me, I'm at Easter Bunny's Paint Shop. (*Exits at right*)

COTTONTAIL (*Offstage at right*): Come on, Longears. We must paint them now.

TRIPTOES: I'll simply have to get to the Paint Shop somehow! Maybe I can walk on my hands. (*Tentatively puts hands on ground in front of him, then lifts them again*) No. If I do that, I can't carry the eggs. Too bad that they break so easily. (DANNY DWARF *enters from left. He carries a pail in one hand, a brush in the other. He walks by* TRIPTOES *without looking at him, whistling as he goes.*) Mister Dwarf!

DANNY DWARF (*Turning*): Yes? Who is speaking to me?

TRIPTOES: I am.

DANNY DWARF (*Turning toward him*): Oh. Who are you?

TRIPTOES: One of the Bunny Brigade, Easter Bunny's own aides.

DANNY DWARF: Ah yes! It is nearly Easter too, isn't it? And I with my crocuses still untended. I must hurry. (*Hurries toward right*)

TRIPTOES: Wait, Mister Dwarf. I need to ask you a question.

DANNY DWARF: My name is Danny, little rabbit. All right, but hurry. What is it?

TRIPTOES: Danny, how can I get these eggs colored? (*Points to basket*)

DANNY DWARF: Why, easily enough! Get some paint and a brush, and simply paint them!

TRIPTOES (*Pointing to foot*): I can't. I have a sore foot. But I thought that if that is paint you have there—

DANNY DWARF (*Clasping his pail to him guardedly*): I need this paint. Don't you know who I am? I am the one who paints the crocuses as fast as they spring out of the ground. That is why they are so cheerful, so gay, our first little flowers of the springtime. But for me, they'd all be white.

TRIPTOES: I wouldn't need *much* paint. Only enough for a dozen eggs.

DANNY DWARF (*Taking a few more steps toward right*): I'm sorry. I can't do it.

TRIPTOES: *Please*. I'll lose my rank as a Bunnyland Brigadier.

DANNY DWARF (*Shaking his head*): No, no, no. Positively no.

TRIPTOES: But Danny, couldn't you leave a few crocuses white? Maybe just a dozen. White is the Easter lily color, you know. There ought to be a few white crocuses for Easter along with all the bright-colored ones.

DANNY DWARF (*Pulling his beard*): Hmm. Perhaps you are right. All right, I will let you have enough paint. (*Goes to basket, pretends to dip brush in pail, and pretends to sweep it over the eggs.*) There.

TRIPTOES (*Surprised*): My, you did that fast! And so many colors!

DANNY DWARF: I have to work fast, for there are thousands of crocuses. That is why I have this special paint pail too; it has every color in it. But I *must* get along.

TRIPTOES: Thank you, Danny. I will remember you and see that you get an egg. Maybe two.

DANNY DWARF (*Going out at right*): Thanks. But don't bother. I don't eat eggs.

TRIPTOES (*Delightedly picking first one egg, then another, out of basket, admiring it, and replacing it*): They are beautiful! (BUNNIES *enter from right and left.*)

LONGEARS: Well, *my* eggs are all gathered and painted.

PINKNOSE: Mine are gathered, but not painted yet. (*Quickly*) But they will be soon.

VELVETFUR (*Seeing* TRIPTOES' *basket*): What have *you* got there?

TRIPTOES: Just look and see! (BUNNIES *gather about* TRIPTOES *and his basket.*)

PINKNOSE: What bee-ootiful colors!

LUCKYFOOT: And what large eggs!

COTTONTAIL: How did you do it?

VELVETFUR: Is your foot all better?

TRIPTOES: I'm a Brigadier of Bunnyland, am I not? Don't we Brigadiers always do our jobs? (*Other* BUNNIES *nod their heads.*)

LONGEARS: It's amazing!

LUCKYFOOT: But come, we must go to the Easter Bunny with our baskets of eggs. Can you come with us, Triptoes?

TRIPTOES (*Trying his foot cautiously*): Yes, I think so. If I may lean on Cottontail's shoulder, and if someone will carry my eggs for me. (COTTONTAIL *offers his shoulder, and* LONGEARS *takes his basket in his free hand. They line up and, to tune of "Onward Christian Soldiers," march out single file at right,* TRIPTOES *and* COTTONTAIL *bringing up the rear.*)

THE END

A Present for Mother

by June Barr

Characters

JANIE
BILL
LITTLE SQUIRREL
LITTLE DEER
LITTLE RABBIT
LITTLE BEAR
MR. WISE OLD OWL

SCENE 1

SETTING: *The woods. A big fallen log in center, with bushes around it.*

AT RISE: JANIE *and* BILL *enter, and head for fallen log, slowly.*

BILL: Whew! Let's sit down here and rest!

JANIE (*Sits down with a sigh*): Oh, dear, I suppose we might as well.

LITTLE SQUIRREL (*Comes dancing on stage, and over to* JANIE *and* BILL): Hello! What are you two doing out in the woods?

BILL: Oh, hello, Little Squirrel!

JANIE: We're looking for a present for Mother. Sunday is Mother's Day.

LITTLE SQUIRREL: What's Mother's Day?

JANIE: Oh, it's the day when we stop and remember how nice Mother is—

BILL: And then give her a little present to let her *know* we think she's nice.

JANIE: Only—we can't think what to give her.

LITTLE SQUIRREL: Why, that's easy! Give her a big, fat, juicy *nut!* That's what *I'd* give *my* mother!

BILL (*Laughing*): Oh, but that's different!

JANIE: *Our* mother isn't a *squirrel!*

LITTLE DEER (*Poking head through the bushes*): Whose mother isn't a squirrel?

BILL and JANIE: *Our* mother!

LITTLE DEER (*Stepping from bushes*): Well, of course not! Whoever heard of such a thing!

LITTLE SQUIRREL: Well, since you know so much about it, maybe you can help them.

LITTLE DEER: What's the trouble?

JANIE: Sunday is Mother's Day.

BILL: And we can't think of a present for Mother.

LITTLE DEER: What's Mother's Day?

LITTLE SQUIRREL: It's the day for showing their mother they think she is nice.

LITTLE DEER: Oh. Let me think. (*Gazes up in air, thinking, then looks back at others*) I have it! Why don't you show her a fine patch of new grass! That's what I'd do for *my* mother!

JANIE: But what would she do with grass?

LITTLE DEER: Why, eat it, of course!

BILL: But, Little Deer, our Mother doesn't *eat* grass!

JANIE: She isn't a *deer!*

LITTLE SQUIRREL: Oh—ho! ho! ho! (*Holding his sides*) And you were so smart!

LITTLE DEER: Well, I did the best I could!

LITTLE RABBIT (*Comes hopping around log*): Of course you did, Little Deer! You always do your best.

BILL: Hello, Little Rabbit!

JANIE: Maybe you have an idea!

LITTLE SQUIRREL: What can they give their mother for Mother's Day?

LITTLE RABBIT: What's Mother's Day?

LITTLE DEER: It's the day when you share with your Mother the best patch of grass you've found. At least—(*He adds hurriedly,* *with a glance at* LITTLE SQUIRREL)—that's what *I'd* do for *my* mother!

LITTLE SQUIRREL: Or bring her the biggest *nut* you could find!

BILL: A day for being especially nice to Mother.

LITTLE RABBIT: I see. (*Puts head on one side to think*) I know!

BILL and JANIE: What? What?

LITTLE RABBIT: Give her a big juicy carrot from the farmer's garden!

DISMAYED CHORUS: Oh, no.

LITTLE RABBIT: Why not? That's what I'd give *my* mother!

JANIE: But our mother isn't a *rabbit!*

LITTLE RABBIT (*Thoughtfully*): So she isn't, children.

BILL: Well, we're no nearer the answer than before.

LITTLE BEAR: What answer? (*Pokes head up over fallen log, then climbs over.*)

BILL: We want a present for Mother.

JANIE: And we don't know what to get.

LITTLE SQUIRREL: It's Mother's Day.

LITTLE BEAR: What's that?

LITTLE RABBIT: A day to remember how good your mother is *all* the days.

LITTLE SQUIRREL: And to give her a present to show you remember.

LITTLE BEAR: Why, how nice! That should be easy! (*Stands thinking, with paw on cheek, while the others wait expectantly*) Of course! Give her some honey! That's what I'd give *my* mother, some sweet, golden honey to eat!

JANIE: But our mother isn't a *bear*! She likes honey, of course, but—I don't think—

LITTLE BEAR: Honey won't do?

JANIE: I'm afraid not, Little Bear.

LITTLE DEER: We haven't been much help—

LITTLE SQUIRREL: I know! Let's ask the Wise Old Owl!

LITTLE RABBIT: Of course! He knows *everything*!

LITTLE BEAR: He'll know the answer!

Little Deer: Let's hurry and find him!

Janie: All right, we'll ask the Wise Old Owl! (*All leave the stage, led by* Little Squirrel, *who is bragging*—)

Little Squirrel: I'm very good friends with the Wise Old Owl. He lives in the hollow tree right next to me.

CURTAIN

* * *

Scene 2

Setting: *Slightly different woods scene, with hollow tree in center.*

At Rise: Janie, Bill, *and all the* Animals *grouped around hollow tree.*

Bill: You call him, Little Squirrel.

Little Squirrel: Mr. Owl! Mr. Wise Old Owl!

Wise Old Owl: Whooo?? Whoooo??

Little Squirrel: It's Little Squirrel—and some friends. We need your help!

Wise Old Owl (*Sticking head out of hollow in tree*): What do you want me to do?

Janie: It's Mother's Day, Mr. Wise Old Owl.

Bill: And we can't think what to give our mother.

Little Rabbit: We tried to help—

Little Squirrel: But none of us can think what she'd like.

Little Bear: Not honey.

Little Deer: Not grass.

Little Squirrel: Not a nut.

Little Rabbit: Not a lettuce leaf.

Wise Old Owl: Well, well, well! There's a very simple answer to that!

Janie: Oh, tell us what it is, then!

Bill: Yes, tell us, please!

ANIMALS: Please do!

WISE OLD OWL: Every day you see things you think are beautiful, or odd, or interesting, don't you?

JANIE: Oh, yes!

WISE OLD OWL: Some of them you exclaim over, and show each other, isn't that true?

BILL: Yes, we always do that!

WISE OLD OWL: And sometimes you say, "Oh, I wish Mother could see that!" Now, don't you?

JANIE and BILL: Yes!

WISE OLD OWL: Well, the next time you come to something that makes you wish as hard as anything that Mother could see it—

JANIE: Yes?

WISE OLD OWL: That's the present for Mother!

JANIE: Oh, I know just what you mean! There was a patch of wild flowers on the edge of the woods, and we stopped there a long time just looking, and we wished and wished that Mother could see them!

BILL: I remember! Let's go pick some, Janie! Then she *could* see them!

JANIE: Oh, yes! Let's! (*As they start off*, JANIE *looks back*) Thank you, Mr. Wise Old Owl, and goodbye!

BILL: And thanks to you, Little Bear, and Little Deer, and Little Rabbit and Little Squirrel! We're going to get our mother some pretty flowers!

LITTLE SQUIRREL: And I'm going to get *my* mother a big nut!

LITTLE DEER: And I'm going to get *my* mother some grass!

LITTLE RABBIT: And I'm going to get *my* mother a lettuce leaf!

LITTLE BEAR: And I'm going to get *my* mother some sweet, golden honey!

JANIE: Then we'll *all* be keeping Mother's Day!

BILL: What fun! (*All troop off.*)

THE END

No-Mother Land

by Lucille Streacker

Characters

TOMMY	TURTLE
SAMANTHA	3 PIXIES
WISE OLD OWL	MOTHER

SETTING: *A woods.*

AT RISE: WISE OLD OWL *is perched in one corner.* TOMMY *and* SAMANTHA *enter slowly.*

SAMANTHA: I wonder how far we are from home now, Tommy.

TOMMY: About a hundred miles, I guess. Let's rest awhile. (*They sit down on the grass, mopping their faces with their handkerchiefs.*)

WISE OLD OWL (*Flapping his wings*):

Whoo, whoo, who are you,
And what in the world are you both up to? (*They jump up startled.*)

TOMMY: We are the Lee twins, Tommy and Samantha. And we're running away from home, that's what! All day long our mother says, "Tommy, do this, Samantha, do that," and we're getting tired of it.

SAMANTHA: We're running away where Mother can't find us. Then we can do just as we please.

WISE OLD OWL:

Whoo-whoo
Foolish you!
Children need their mothers

To keep them clean and fed;
To teach them proper manners,
And tuck them into bed. (*Three* PIXIES *pop out from behind leaves.*)

FIRST PIXIE: Oh, never mind him, Tommy and Samantha. He's just an old owl who thinks he knows everything.

SECOND PIXIE: We get along very well without a mother and you can, too.

THIRD PIXIE: See, how happy we are!

(*They all begin to chant.*)

Oh, ho ho! Ah, ha he,
We are the pixies, we are free.
We stay up late as we like at night,
We don't have to bathe or be polite.
We eat what we want and we get to play
Without any work the livelong day.

FIRST PIXIE: Why don't you stay here with us?

SECOND PIXIE: It's a secret place where mothers can't find us.

TOMMY: That's just the place we've been looking for.

THIRD PIXIE: Hurray! But if you live with us you'll have to wear a pixie cap. (*Pulls two out of his pocket and gives them to* TOMMY *and* SAMANTHA *who put them on.*)

WISE OLD OWL:

Whoo-oo, a pixie cap!
A dunce cap's what you need.
For children need a mother,
Oh, yes, they do, indeed!

FIRST PIXIE: Quiet, old owl! Go back to sleep and mind your own business. (*He picks up a stick to throw at the* OWL *and bumps into the* SECOND PIXIE, *starting a fight between them.*)

THIRD PIXIE: Oh, never mind them. They're always fighting.

SAMANTHA: Doesn't their mother . . . I mean, doesn't anybody stop them?

THIRD PIXIE: Of course not. We don't have mothers or anyone to settle our arguments. We fight it out.

SAMANTHA: But they might get hurt!

WISE OLD OWL:

You see they need a mother
To teach them to be good,
And make them stop their fighting
And act like children should.

THIRD PIXIE: Hush, you old owl. Do you want to fight, Tommy? (*Doubles his fists*)

TOMMY: N-no. (FIRST *and* SECOND PIXIE *are now on the ground pummeling each other.*)

SECOND PIXIE (*Screaming*): Ye-ow! (*Rolls over unconscious*)

FIRST PIXIE (*Rising and brushing his hands*): Joe's knocked out.

SAMANTHA: Poor Joe! What can we do for him?

THIRD PIXIE: Aw, nothing. He's all right. We're not sissies with a mother to doctor us up.

FIRST PIXIE: I'm hungry. Let's eat.

TOMMY: So are we. What do we eat?

THIRD PIXIE:

Oh, anything! Anything!
Purple grapes from a grapevine swing,
Elderberry, sassafras,
Nuts and toadstools, bits of grass.

SAMANTHA: But maybe some of those are poison. Maybe they'll make us sick.

FIRST PIXIE: You'll just have to try them and see. Your mother isn't here to tell you whether they are or not.

TOMMY (*Picking some berries off a bush and tasting them carefully*): Here's some funny kind of berries. They would taste better in a pie.

THIRD PIXIE: Pie! Ha, ha. Tommy wants pie. You should have stayed with Mother if you wanted pie. Why, what's the matter?

TOMMY (*Holding his stomach*): I don't feel so good. And it's getting kind of dark.

FIRST PIXIE: What? Aren't you going to stay up till the moon comes up? We have a favorite game, hunting for cobwebs in the moonlight. Your mother isn't here to make you go to bed early now.

TOMMY: Oh, no. My stomach aches. I'm sick. Where are the beds?

THIRD PIXIE: Don't be a sissy, Tommy. Pixies don't have any beds. Nobody wants to make them up and keep the bedding clean. Go crawl under a leaf and keep still. (*The* PIXIES *start a game of leap frog.*)

TOMMY: Oh, my stomach hurts. Why don't you do something for me?

FIRST PIXIE: We're playing leap frog. We haven't time.

SAMANTHA (*Crossly*): I think you ought to help Tommy and Joe.

THIRD PIXIE: What could we do?

SAMANTHA: You might sing to them. Mother used to sing to us when we were sick and it made us forget the hurt and go to sleep.

THIRD PIXIE: All right. (*The two* PIXIES *put their arms about each other and sing loudly and tunelessly.*)

A load of pixies went to town
With a jimbledy, jambledy, jumbledy clown!
They wore green vests and pixie hats,
And jimbledy, jambledy, jumbledy spats.

TOMMY (*Putting his hands to his ears*): Oh, stop! Stop!

SECOND PIXIE (*Sits up dizzily holding his head*): What a noise!

SAMANTHA (*Squealing*): Oh, Joe's coming to!

FIRST PIXIE: What's the matter? Don't you like our singing?

SAMANTHA: It's terrible. Mother sang a lullaby, like this . . . (*Voice offstage crooning*)

TOMMY: That was Mother! Mother, Mother!

THIRD PIXIE: Ha, ha. Tommy, you're crazy. That was only the wind.

WISE OLD OWL:

Whoo, whoo! Whoo, whoo!
A bunch of sillies, all of you.
See, I told you boys and girls
Were meant to have a Mom.
And you had better go back home,
Samantha Lee and Tom. (TURTLE *crawls in.*)

TURTLE (*Shaking his finger at the* OWL):

That's what you say, Mr. Wise Old Bird.
It's the silliest talk I ever heard.
I haven't had a mother since I hatched from an egg,
But you never saw a turtle who had to beg.

SAMANTHA: I guess if the turtle can get along we can too, Tommy.

TOMMY: Oh, sure.

WISE OLD OWL:

Remember a turtle carries his home
Wherever he may be,
But it takes a mother to make a home
For Tom and Samantha Lee.

FIRST PIXIE: Aw, go away, you croaking old bird. You know mothers aren't as important as they want you to think they are. Why they even try to make us believe they're all good and unselfish and loving. Your mother was downright mean to you, wasn't she, Tom?

TOM (*Reluctantly*): Well, sometimes she did spank us. But only when we were pretty bad.

SECOND PIXIE: Well, anyhow, she was selfish, always asking you and Samantha to do the work while she sat around.

SAMANTHA: Oh no, Mother worked, too. Really and truly she wasn't selfish. She gave us money and took us places we wanted to go.

THIRD PIXIE: Yes, but she was cross and scolded you and made you do things you didn't want to do and wouldn't let you do what you wanted to at all. Besides, remember how many times she was too busy to bother with you?

SAMANTHA: But sometimes she called us her darlings.

TOMMY: And once she sat up all night with me when I was sick.

SAMANTHA: Oh, Tom, that proves Mother loves us. She'll be worried sick because we're gone.

TOMMY: We've got to go back!

SECOND PIXIE: But you can't go home. Only a mother can get you out of No-Mother land and they can't find their way in.

TOMMY *and* SAMANTHA: Oh, dear!

WISE OLD OWL (*Sternly*):

When you left home in such a hurry,
Didn't you know your Mom would worry?

SAMANTHA: I don't want to go back just because Mother will worry, though, Mr. Owl. There's another reason. (*Begins to cry*) It's because I've just found out how much I love her.

TOMMY: Me, too!

WISE OLD OWL:

Too late, too late, I'm sorry to say,
But it's your fate for running away.
And now I'll be leaving you all. Good-day! (*Flies out*)

SAMANTHA: Please, Turtle, can't you help us some way?

TURTLE: No, indeed. Besides I don't believe in mothers. If you'll excuse me, I'll be going. (*Crawls away*)

FIRST PIXIE (*Yawning*): Oh, hum. I think I'll take a nap till the moon comes up.

SECOND *and* THIRD PIXIES: Me, too. (*They crawl behind their leaves.*)

SAMANTHA: Oh, Tom, nobody here cares anything about us. They've all gone off and left us. What shall we do?

TOM: I don't know. And I'm too sick to think.

SAMANTHA: I wish we'd never run away. I wish Mother could find us. Now she'll never know how much we love her. (MOTHER's *voice offstage calls, "Tommy! Samantha!"*)

TOMMY *and* SAMANTHA: Mother! (OWL *flies in to his old perch.*)

WISE OLD OWL: Hush, don't wake the pixies up.

TOMMY: But our mother's coming. How did she find us? The pixies said . . .

WISE OLD OWL: It's a secret way the pixies don't know because they don't have mothers. But it's very simple. As long as children love their mother they will never lose her. All she has to do to find them is to follow the secret message they send out when they say they love her.

SAMANTHA: Why didn't you tell us?

WISE OLD OWL: Because you had to find it out for yourselves. I did all I could. (*Voice offstage nearer calls, "Samantha! Tommy!"*)

SAMANTHA *and* TOMMY: Mother! (MOTHER *enters and they run to her.*)

MOTHER: Oh, my darlings! I've been so worried.

SAMANTHA: And we've been so bad! But we'll never do it again!

TOMMY: Never, never!

WISE OLD OWL: Whoo, whoo, I hope that's true!

THE END

Return of the Nina

by Esther MacLellan and Catherine V. Schroll

Characters

BEATRIZ
JUAN
JUAN'S MOTHER
TIO FELIPE
ALFREDO
PABLO
CARLOS } *townspeople of Palos*
MARIA
ISOBEL
JOSE
COLUMBUS
MEMBERS OF THE CREW
INDIANS

TIME: *March 15, 1493.*
SETTING: *The harbor at Palos.*
AT RISE: JUAN *is seated on a log. With his head resting on his hands, he looks out over the audience. Enter* BEATRIZ.

BEATRIZ: I thought to find you here, Juan. I finished my work and slipped out of the house before Mother thought of some other errand for me to do. Now we can have a little time together. What shall we play?

JUAN: I cannot play, Beatriz. I am busy.

BEATRIZ: Busy? You are not fishing.

JUAN: No.

BEATRIZ: You only sit and stare at the water. You have been doing that every day for weeks. What do you see?

JUAN: Nothing. Only the great ocean and the sky.

BEATRIZ: I think it's silly to waste time when we could be having fun.

JUAN: I am waiting for the return of my father's ship.

BEATRIZ: Oh, the fishing fleet won't be in till sunset.

JUAN: My father isn't fishing. He sailed on the *Nina*, the *Nina* that left Palos last August. August 3, 1492.

BEATRIZ: Last August? So long ago? It's almost a year.

JUAN: 32 weeks. I have marked the time.

BEATRIZ: No sailor has ever been at sea for 32 weeks. It is impossible.

JUAN: No sailor before has ever traveled west to the Indies, Beatriz.

BEATRIZ: To the Indies? Then your father went with Columbus?

JUAN: Yes.

BEATRIZ: I have heard my father and my uncles speak of him. They say Columbus and his ships are surely lost. They say no one can cross the great ocean.

JUAN: *They* say. What do *they* know? Everything has to be done for the first time.

BEATRIZ (*Slowly*): I suppose so. But I'd be scared. I'd rather wait until someone tried it first.

JUAN: That's the way with most people. My father is different. He is brave. And he wanted to go with Columbus, for one brave man knows another, you see. My father told me that Columbus was the bravest man he had ever met. (*Enter* MOTHER.)

MOTHER: Ah, here you are, my son. Always in the same place, looking out over the broad Atlantic.

JUAN: Yes, Mother.

MOTHER (*Shaking head*): It is useless, my boy, useless. We must face the truth. Your father is lost. (*Raises a handkerchief to her eyes.*)

JUAN: No, Mother, no. That is not the truth.

MOTHER: The *Nina* has been gone for 32 weeks, since the 3rd of last August. I know how many days have passed. I have counted them with my tears.

JUAN: It is long, Mother, but the Indies are far away.

BEATRIZ: No one knows how many weeks of sailing are needed to reach the Indies, for no one has ever tried it. Juan explained it to me.

JUAN: That's it, Mother. Don't you understand? Sailing West to reach the East is new. It isn't the same as taking a ship to . . . to Portugal.

MOTHER (*Sighing*): I hope that you are right. But if your father is gone much longer, how are we to live? I have scarcely a penny left.

JUAN: Can't Tio Felipe lend us some? He is rich.

MOTHER: Tio Felipe says that he didn't get rich by lending money to his poor relations.

JUAN: But just a little? Surely he cannot be so cruel as to let us starve?

MOTHER: Your Tio Felipe is not cruel. He has offered to loan me money, if . . .

JUAN: If what? (*Enter* TIO FELIPE)

TIO FELIPE: I knew I'd find you here. Juan, you are a lazy scamp!

MOTHER: No, no, Tio Felipe. Juan is a good boy. He works hard to help me.

TIO FELIPE: Then why does he waste so much time at the harbor?

MOTHER: The boy looks for the *Nina*, his father's ship.

TIO FELIPE: Such nonsense! Columbus and his men are lost. Lost months ago. A crazy scheme! Sailing West across the Atlantic! Whoever heard of such a thing?

JUAN: Why crazy, Tio Felipe? The world is round. All the wise men say so.

Tio Felipe: *Say* so, yes. It's easy enough to *say* so. The doing is quite another matter. Perhaps the world is round. I agree to that.

Mother: Then West to reach the East is sensible enough.

Tio Felipe: Not to a sailor, Senora, not to a sailor! When younger I went to sea. I know what I'm talking about. No ship could withstand the wild gales that sweep across the Atlantic. *No* ship. Besides, who knows how wide the ocean really is?

Juan: Columbus says that it is narrow.

Tio Felipe: *Says*. There's that "says" again. But who *knows?* (*Shakes his head impatiently*) Enough of this idle talk. Have you told the boy?

Mother: Not yet.

Tio Felipe: Then do so now.

Mother: Your uncle says he will help us, Juan, if only . . .

Juan: Yes?

Mother: If only you consent to leave Palos and work on his farm.

Juan: But Mother! Tio Felipe's farm is miles and miles from the ocean. How can I leave the sea? You know I am going to be a sailor like Father. If I go to the farm, I'll be there all my life! I'll never get on a ship!

Mother: I know, dear. But what are we to do?

Beatriz: Don't go, Juan.

Juan: Farming is fine for some, Tio Felipe, but not for the men of Palos. I'd rather starve than leave the ocean.

Tio Felipe: Brave words, boy, brave words. I hope you can eat them. Not a penny of mine will go to a nephew who won't work.

Juan: I'll work. I'll fish and scrub decks and . . . (*Enter* TOWNSPEOPLE. *They hurry on stage in great excitement.*)

Alfredo (*Pointing out over audience*): There it is! There it is!

Pablo: It cannot be. You are mistaken, Alfredo.

Alfredo: I, mistaken! No, indeed.

Carlos: Alfredo is right. I sailed on her myself, and a fine little vessel she was.

MARIA: Is it true? Has my son at last reached home?

ISOBEL: After all these weary weeks and months of waiting. It's a miracle, that's what it is, a miracle!

TIO FELIPE: What's all this fuss? What's all this nonsense?

BEATRIZ (*Pointing*): It's a ship. See her rounding the curve in the river?

JUAN: I do! I do! O, Mother! It's the *Nina!*

MOTHER: Are you sure, my boy?

JUAN: How could I be wrong? I would know Father's ship on a dark night in a fog. It's the *Nina,* all right.

MOTHER: Father is home at last! My son, how thankful we must be.

JUAN: Home from the Indies! What stories he will tell!

CARLOS: The brave Columbus was right after all.

ALFREDO: How I wish now that I had gone! All the crew will be rich!

JOSE: I would have sailed had I been but a few years younger. Adventure! Riches! With a leader like Columbus the plan was sure to come right.

PABLO: But the *Nina,* traveling alone? Where is the flagship, the *Santa Maria?*

ALFREDO: Perhaps Columbus didn't reach the Indies after all. Perhaps the *Santa Maria* went down with all hands lost. Perhaps only the *Nina* turned back in time to be saved.

JOSE: Perhaps! Perhaps! I don't believe it.

CARLOS: Nor I. The *Nina* is a better ship, that's the truth of the matter. The *Santa Maria* will be limping along in a day or two.

JUAN: Columbus would never give up! He's reached the Indies.

MOTHER: I pray that you are right.

ALFREDO: We will find out in a moment. (*Looking offstage*) The *Nina* has anchored and sent off a boat. Who is that in front? Is it Columbus?

JOSE: That's Columbus. No doubt about it.

ISOBEL: Who are those men with him, dressed so strangely?

PABLO: How queerly they are colored!

MARIA: Who ever saw the like? They have red skins.

JUAN: It is Columbus, returned at last. What do you say now, Tio Felipe? It was possible to sail West across the Atlantic, if men were brave enough to try.

TIO FELIPE: What do I say, boy? I say I was wrong. And for once I'm glad to be wrong. This day, March . . . What day is it?

JUAN: March 15, 1493.

TIO FELIPE: This day, March 15, 1493, is a great day for Spain, a day that will live forever.

MARIA: And a great day for all the wives and mothers of the men on board.

BEATRIZ: Don't forget Columbus! Don't forget Columbus! It is a great day for Columbus, too. (*Enter* COLUMBUS, *followed by* MEMBERS OF THE CREW *and* INDIANS.)

COLUMBUS: Did I hear you say a great day for Columbus, Senorita? Indeed it is.

CARLOS (*Bowing*): Welcome home, sir. Welcome to Palos.

PABLO: Tell us, Admiral, what of the Indies?

ALFREDO: Are they as rich as people say?

JOSE: Did you find gold?

ISOBEL: My husband, is he alive?

CARLOS: What of the *Santa Maria?* Is she lost?

COLUMBUS (*Raising hand for silence*): Friends! The *Santa Maria* is gone . . .

MARIA: My son! He sailed on the *Santa Maria!* He is lost!

COLUMBUS: No, no, all lives were spared. The men are safe.

MOTHER: The men are safe. What beautiful words!

COLUMBUS: As for the rest, let questions wait till later. We go now to the cathedral to offer thanks for our safe return. (COLUMBUS *goes off followed by* TOWNSPEOPLE.)

TIO FELIPE: Come niece, come Juan, and Beatriz, too. Off to the cathedral—not only to give thanks for the return of friends and neighbors, but to give thanks for a brave leader like Columbus. A worthy leader for Spain and for the world. (*They cross the stage and exit as the curtain closes.*)

THE END

The Magic Jack-O-Lantern

by Helen Littler Howard

Characters

GOBLINS:
  TRAPPY, *who is always playing tricks on others*
  FLAPPY, *who has enormous ears*
  NAPPY, *who never is fully awake*
  (And as many more as you care to have)
ELVES:
  MICKY
  NICKY, *and others if you want them.*
A WITCH

SETTING: *Any spot where elves and goblins might meet on Halloween.*
TIME: *Just before the Halloween Jamboree.*
AT RISE: FLAPPY *comes on the stage carrying a large jack-o-lantern.*

FLAPPY: Halloween at last! I do wish I could think of a way to get that beautiful scarlet leaf from Trappy. He is always playing tricks on others so I wouldn't feel mean if I could trick him once. If I had that leaf to wear in my cap at the Halloween Jamboree no one would notice my ears. Here comes my friend the Witch. Maybe she could tell me a thing or two. (OLD WITCH *comes hobbling in on a broomstick.*)

FLAPPY: Hi, Witch. You are just in time to help me.

WITCH: Greetings, Flappy. A fine Halloween night, to be sure. What can I do for you? A magic potion perhaps?

FLAPPY: Perhaps. Trappy has a magnificent scarlet leaf which I hanker to wear to the Jamboree tonight so that no one would notice my ears. He won't lend it, sell it, or trade it. He sets so many traps for others that I wouldn't feel mean about tricking him out of it.

WITCH: Let me see! How about a magic jack-o-lantern.

FLAPPY: But I haven't a magic jack-o-lantern.

WITCH: You have a jack-o-lantern and I can tell you how to make it magic.

FLAPPY: Can you? Oh, please do.

WITCH: Come close so I can whisper the secret to you. . . . I wouldn't want anyone else to hear. (FLAPPY *comes close to the* WITCH *and she whispers something in his ear.*)

FLAPPY: The very thing! I do thank you with all my heart.

WITCH: Good luck. (*Goes off stage.*)

FLAPPY: I'll wear the leaf to the Jamboree, and then no one will notice my ears! (*Enter* TRAPPY, NAPPY *and other Goblins.*)

FLAPPY: Hi, fellows. All ready for the Jamboree? I see you are wearing your scarlet leaf, Trappy. I wish I had one to stick in my cap so that no one would notice my ears.

TRAPPY: I won't give it to you, sell it to you, nor trade it.

NAPPY (*Yawning*): Who said something about a raid?

TRAPPY: No, no, Nappy. Wake up. I said I wouldn't trade my leaf for anything Flappy has.

FLAPPY: That's too bad you won't consider a trade. I thought you might like my magic jack-o-lantern.

TRAPPY: *Magic* jack-o-lantern! What's magic about it? It looks like any other jack-o-lantern to me.

NAPPY: Looks like any other jack-o-lantern to me! Looks just like mine. (*Others laugh.*)

FLAPPY: It is a magic jack-o-lantern though.

TRAPPY: What can it do?

FLAPPY: I'll show you. Trappy, I'll take off the lid and blow out the light, and you put your leaf inside. (*They do so.*) Now I'll wager that I can get the leaf and I won't touch the jack-o-lantern.

TRAPPY: Agreed! If you can get the leaf without touching the lantern I'll give it to you. (GOBLINS *gather around.*)

FLAPPY (*Walks slowly around the jack-o-lantern three times*): Adaca Cadabra . . . Adaca Cadabra, *etc.* Now take off the lid, Trappy. (TRAPPY *does so.*) And I take the leaf. (*Does so without touching the lantern.*)

TRAPPY: Here, give me my leaf.

NAPPY: My leaf!

FLAPPY: It's mine. I said I'd wager that I could get the leaf without touching the lantern and I did. (GOBLINS *laugh.*)

NAPPY: I guess that's right. You won it all right. (GOBLINS *go off stage leaving* TRAPPY *and* NAPPY.)

TRAPPY: Well, I lost my leaf, but it was a good trick. I wish I had a lantern so I could play it on some of the elves when they come. Let me use yours, Nappy.

NAPPY: I want to lay the brick . . . I mean play the joke. It's my lantern, but I'll give you whatever I get. Here come the elves, and look, one of them has a scarlet robin's feather in his cap. I'll get it for you.

TRAPPY: Do you think you know how, Nappy? Were you awake all of the time so you know how it goes?

NAPPY: Of course I was . . . I can remember it exactly . . . I think. (ELVES *enter.* MICKY *is wearing a cap with a red feather in it.*)

MICKY: Hi, Goblins! Can you tell us where the Jamboree is to be?

TRAPPY: Over there in the forest under the biggest oak tree.

NAPPY: That's a fine feather you have in your cap, Micky. How would you like to borrow it . . . I mean lend it to Trappy.

MICKY: I really wouldn't part with it. It's a special feather.

NICKY: The Queen gave it to him. She put it in his cap with her own hands.

NAPPY: Maybe you would like to trade it for my magic jack-o-lantern . . .

MICKY: *Magic* jack-o-lantern! It looks like any other pumpkin face to me. What's magic about it?

NAPPY: Here, you show me . . . I mean I'll show you.

TRAPPY (*Aside*): Are you sure you can do it, Nappy?

NAPPY: Now you meave it to le . . . I mean me. Now I'll take off the lid and you put the feather inside. (*They do so.*) Now, I'll bet that you can't get the feather unless I touch the lantern.

MICKY: That I can't get the feather unless you touch the lantern! I'll wager my feather against your lantern that I can.

NAPPY (*Greatly excited*): I'll go around the lantern like this . . . (*Goes around three times saying "Adaca Cadabra"* . . .) Now take off the lid, Micky. (MICKY *does so and also takes the feather.*)

MICKY: There I took the feather and you didn't touch the lantern . . . (*Takes lantern*) so the lantern and feather are both mine. You must be touched by the moonlight, Nappy. (ELVES *go off laughing.*)

TRAPPY (*Rolling about in delight*): That was worth losing my leaf!

NAPPY: Now, what did I say wrong! I can't touch the feather unless you—no, no . . . You can't touch the lantern until I . . . Oh, how does it go!

TRAPPY: Never mind, Nappy. I guess the tables were turned on us that time . . .

NAPPY: And I lost my beautiful lack-o-jantern!

TRAPPY: Maybe you'll learn to keep awake after this. Hi ho for the Halloween Jamboree! (*They go off laughing.*)

THE END

The Little Witch Who Tried

by Eleanore Leuser

Characters

WINSOME WINNIE, *the littlest witch*
ESMERALDA, *the elegant witch*
FANNY, *the ailing witch*
SILLITA, *the giggly witch*
MIN, *the athletic witch*
HONORIA, *the motherly witch*
DOROTHY, *an ordinary little girl*
HELEN, *her friend*

SETTING: *Dorothy's kitchen. There are seven broomsticks in the corner.*

AT RISE: *The witches are gathered in a semi-circle about* WINNIE.

WITCHES (*Chanting*):
Sing a song of witches.
Halloween is come.
Witches with their broomsticks.
Now's the time for fun.

Lots of little witches
Riding in the sky.
Black cats tell the story,
Halloween is nigh.

Sing a song of witches.
Halloween is here.
Anything can happen—
Not a thing to fear.

HONORIA (*Stepping forward and putting hand on* WINNIE'S *shoulder*): Winnie—are you sure you want to be a real girl instead of a witch? Just think of all the fun you'll miss. It isn't too late to change your mind, you know, dear. I'm a little worried about you.

WINNIE (*Eagerly*): Oh, Honoria, you know I've always wanted to be a girl. I'm so sick of being just a witch. They're so ordinary.

ESMERALDA (*Disdainfully*): You are a very silly little witch. It is girls who are ordinary, not witches. Witches have a certain charm totally lacking in mere mortals.

SILLITA (*Giggling*): You'll look so silly without a broomstick.

FANNY (*Languidly*): I'm afraid you'll feel ill eating those horrible messes that humans call meals. One has to be so careful.

MIN (*Briskly*): What's your black cat going to do while you're away? I suppose you'll want me to feed her for you. But I'll not take her sky riding. I have eleven cats of my own to exercise.

WINNIE: Oh, you're all trying to make me feel badly. I know I'll love being a girl. Go away and let me alone.

MIN (*Gruffly*): Well, I say—Winnie's down here now. She might as well try being a girl. If she doesn't she'll turn into one of those pestering witches that are a nuisance to have around.

HONORIA: You're right, Min. But Winsome Winnie, if you want to remain a girl, there's one thing you'll have to remember—*never* tell anybody you were once a witch. If you do, you'll become a witch again and we'll have to come and get you right away.

WINNIE (*Eagerly*): Oh, I'll never, never tell. I won't want to. Everybody will think I'm just a regular girl.

MIN: Come on, folks, let's hop on our broomsticks. Good-bye, Winnie. (HONORIA *takes* WINNIE'S *cape and hat and straightens* *the ordinary cotton dress underneath. There is a chorus of good-byes as each witch gets on her broomstick, according to her type—* ESMERALDA *as if she were a Powers model,* SILLITA, *giggling,* FANNY, *feebly,* MIN, *as if it were a bucking broncho and* HONORIA *in a dignified manner. They all go off chanting.*)

WITCHES:

Sing a song of witches.
Halloween is come.
Witches with their broomsticks.
Now's the time for fun.

WINNIE (*Looking around interestedly*): I'm glad I chose this house to come to. It looks so nice and homey. Witches don't even have a house to live in. The little girl here looked nice too. I hope she likes me. She'll probably be surprised to see me. (DOROTHY *opens the door and comes in but stops short when she sees* WINNIE.)

DOROTHY (*Surprised and hesitating*): Why, hello! I'm Dorothy. Who are you?

WINNIE: I'm Winsome Winnie, the . . . (*Claps her hands over her mouth*) I mean I'm just Winnie. I thought I'd like to visit you.

DOROTHY (*Cordially*): Why, that's fine. Did you just move around here? I don't think I've seen you before.

WINNIE (*Embarrassed*): We . . . ell, you might say I've just moved here. I've never had a real girl to play with before. You look so nice. I do hope we'll be friends.

DOROTHY (*Enthusiastically*): Oh, I'm glad you came. We can have lots of fun together. Helen, the girl who lives next door, is coming over soon and we are going to plan for Halloween. Would you like to help me around the house and get things done? I promised Mother I'd have everything finished before Helen and I got busy.

WINNIE (*Doubtfully*): I don't know much about houses but I'll help any way I can. I know lots more about Halloween.

DOROTHY (*Laughing and giving her a broom*): Well, it isn't very hard to use this. If you wouldn't mind doing the kitchen while I make my bed it will be a big help. (*She exits to the bedroom.*)

WINNIE (*Staring at broom in her hand*): Do the kitchen with a broom? I wonder what she means? (*She gets astride the broom and starts to ride around the kitchen.* HELEN *comes to the door and stands watching her. Finally she breaks out laughing.* WINNIE *stops.*)

HELEN: What on earth are you doing?

WINNIE: Dorothy told me to do the kitchen with the broom. It doesn't work as well as usual though. There isn't much room in the kitchen to really fly.

HELEN (*Taking the broom*): You're funny. Here, let me do it. (*She starts sweeping as* DOROTHY *returns.*) Hey, Dorothy, your friend here thinks broomsticks are to ride on.

DOROTHY: Oh, hello, Helen. This is Winnie. She's just moved around here. She's going to help us with Halloween when we finish chores.

WINNIE (*Much abashed*): Let me do something else to help, please. I want to learn. Then we can work on Halloween things. That's really my specialty.

HELEN (*Looking at* WINNIE *curiously*): You're the queerest girl I've ever seen.

WINNIE (*Insulted*): I'm not a girl. I'm a—! (*Stopping short*) I mean I'm not queer.

DOROTHY (*Quickly*): How would you like to help me fix this stew for dinner, Winnie?

WINNIE (*Delightedly*): Oh, goody! I make the best stews. Everyone says I do. (*Starts out the door*)

HELEN: Hey, where are you going?

WINNIE (*Stopping short*): Why, out to get some snakes and frogs, of course.

DOROTHY *and* HELEN: What?

WINNIE (*Surprised*): Have I done something else wrong? Honestly, I can make good stew. Even Honoria says I can.

HELEN: Well, I don't know who Honoria is but I think you're either kidding or crazy.

WINNIE (*Furiously*): I'm not crazy. You are. You're nothing but an ordinary girl.

HELEN: Well, what are you, Miss High and Mighty?

WINNIE: I'm a—(*She claps her hands to her mouth, then sits down with her head in her hands.*)

DOROTHY (*Looking distressed*): Never mind, Winnie. Helen is only teasing. Maybe you could help me with my school work.

WINNIE (*Lifting her head eagerly*): Oh, I'm good at telling fortunes.

DOROTHY (*Staring at her*): Telling fortunes!

WINNIE: Yes, isn't that what you learn at school? I'm head of the class in that.

HELEN: What kind of school do you go to?

WINNIE: A wi . . . ! I mean—well, just a school.

HELEN (*Laughing*): I bet they don't even teach you in that school which is farther away—the moon or China.

WINNIE: Why, everyone knows China is the farthest.

HELEN: I thought you wouldn't know. It's the moon, of course, silly!

WINNIE (*Triumphantly*): I can *prove* China is the farthest. You can *see* the moon any clear night, can't you? Well, you can't catch even a glimpse of China.

HELEN (*Overwhelmed*): I give up. You're the weirdest girl I've ever seen. (*Turning to* DOROTHY) What are you going to wear for Halloween, Dot?

DOROTHY (*Enthusiastically*): Mother got me a brand new witch costume. It's stunning.

HELEN (*Disgustedly*): How can a witch costume be stunning? Horrible black creepy things! Now I've got a—

WINNIE (*Springing up*): How dare you say witches are horrible black creepy things! They're not!

HELEN (*Calmly*): Well, don't get so excited. You certainly can't say that witches aren't all alike, old and skinny, with long droopy hair and big noses.

WINNIE (*Shouting angrily*): You don't know what you're talking about. You're all wrong. There are just as many kinds of witches as there are people. Old—young—fat—thin—good-looking . . .

HELEN: Show me just one good-looking witch . . . just one and I'll believe you.

WINNIE (*Quickly*): I'm one!

DOROTHY *and* HELEN (*In amazement*): You're what?

WINNIE (*Defiantly*): I'm a witch!

DOROTHY: I don't believe it!

HELEN: I thought there was something queer around.

WINNIE (*Falling back in her chair*): Oh my goodness, now I've told! (*There is a sound of chanting offstage. It gets louder as the Witches enter. The girls retreat to the background staring in astonishment.*)

WITCHES:

Sing a song of witches,
Halloween is come.
Witches with their broomsticks.
Now's the time for fun.

(*The Witches line up, get off their broomsticks and look at* WINNIE.)

MIN (*Gruffly*): You told, you know—you've got to come back and be a witch again.

ESMERALDA (*Putting on* WINNIE's *hat and cape and adjusting it stylishly*): Don't mind, Winnie. I've made you a stunning outfit to wear on Halloween—all black and gold.

FANNY: I made you the most delicious frog soup with fried snakes. It's better than a dose of medicine. It will make you feel wonderful.

SILLITA (*Giggling*): I couldn't think of anything to do for you but miss you. I almost forgot to giggle. But everybody said you'd be back.

Honoria: We all missed our Winsome Winnie.

Winnie: You know something I've just found out? I make a perfectly good witch but I make a perfectly awful girl. I'd better stick to being a witch. I'll be glad to be back where I belong. Come on—let's go. (*They all mount their broomsticks and go off chanting.*)

Witches:

Sing a song of witches.
Halloween is come.
Witches with their broomsticks.
Now's the time for fun.

Lots of little witches,
Riding in the sky;
Black cats tell the story,
Halloween is nigh.

Sing a song of witches.
Halloween is here.
Anything can happen.
Not a thing to fear.

Helen: Do you think we dreamed up all this?

Dorothy (*Slowly and thoughtfully*): Don't you know anything can happen on Halloween? But I'm kind of glad I'm just a girl.

THE END

Little White Cloud

by Esther Cooper

Characters

FAITH	CHIEF THUNDERBIRD
CHARITY	JOHN
LITTLE WHITE CLOUD	

SETTING: *A pioneer cabin on the western plains.*

AT RISE: FAITH *is seated on the chair at right of table. She is a little pioneer girl. She is wearing a long dress, and her foot is bandaged. In the chair behind the table, her older sister,* CHARITY, *is sewing busily.*

FAITH (*Anxiously*): It's dark, Charity. Don't you think Father and Mother and John should have been home by this time?

CHARITY: I'm sure they're all right. They had to go a long way, you know, to reach Denver City.

FAITH (*Sighing*): I wish we could have gone with them! If only I hadn't sprained my ankle! (*Looks at it.*)

CHARITY (*Cheerfully*): We can go another time.

FAITH: John and Father *always* go! It isn't fair!

CHARITY: But, Faith, they go only to get provisions! And you know *we* couldn't help to load things like barrels of flour! Anyway, they very seldom have room for us.

FAITH: I know it, Charity. I guess I'm just selfish. But I *am* glad Mother could go along this time!

CHARITY: Yes, so am I. Poor Mother—she works so hard! The trip will be a treat for her.

FAITH: I was afraid she wouldn't go at first. Weren't you?

CHARITY: Yes, she doesn't like to leave us alone. But we're safe, here in the settlement.

FAITH: But we live at the very *edge* of the settlement. If Indians came, they'd come here first of all!

CHARITY (*Laughing*): Stop worrying, Faith. No Indians are coming. The Indians are our friends.

FAITH: I know the *plains* Indians are our friends—but not the *mountain* Indians! And it was a band of mountain Indians we saw this afternoon, over on the Cherokee Trail. You said so, yourself.

CHARITY: They've camped there for just a little while. Tomorrow they'll be gone.

FAITH: I hope so! Oh, Charity, I'm so afraid! Suppose Chief Thunderbird is camped over there on the trail. He's our very *worst* enemy! (CHARITY *puts her sewing down, and turns her chair toward her sister.*)

CHARITY: Now, don't worry. I don't imagine Chief Thunderbird is within a hundred miles of this cabin! Let's not talk about Indians any more!

FAITH: I won't. But I do wish Father and Mother would come. I'd feel safer if they were here. And John, too, even if he *is* only thirteen!

CHARITY: They'll be home soon. And, Faith—they'll have barrels of flour! Tomorrow, we'll have fresh bread! You haven't forgotten that tomorrow is Thanksgiving.

FAITH: No, I haven't forgotten. But I don't feel very thankful, with Indians around the house!

CHARITY: We're pioneers—and pioneers have to be brave. Mother told us that when we started West in the covered wagon. Don't you remember? And we promised her we would.

FAITH: I do *try* to be brave. But I'm scared, anyway. Oh, I wish the Indians would make friends with *us* as they made friends with the Pilgrims on the very first Thanksgiving!

CHARITY: Some day, they will, Faith. If we do *our* part.

FAITH (*Starting*): What was that?

CHARITY: I didn't hear anything. (*They listen.*)

FAITH: I know I heard something. Outside the door! (*Runs fearfully to her sister.*) Oh, Faith, I know its Indians!

CHARITY: Not Indians, child. Just Father and the others coming home, perhaps. I'll look. (*Goes to the door and looks out.*) There's no one in sight. (*Returns to table.*)

FAITH: But I'm sure I heard—(*Stops and listens. A scratching sound is heard at the door.*) There it is again!

CHARITY: I hear it now. But—what can it be? (*She again goes toward doorway.*)

FAITH: Don't open the outer door! Please don't!

CHARITY: But I must see what it is! (*Steps through doorway.*)

FAITH (*Cowering behind the table*): Charity—*please!* (CHARITY, *looking surprised, enters, leading a little girl by the hand. The child is white, but is dressed in Indian clothes.*)

CHARITY: Faith—look!

FAITH (*Nervously*): An Indian!

CHARITY: But she isn't an Indian! She's white.

FAITH: She *must* be an Indian! Look at her clothes!

CHARITY: Who are you, little girl? (*The child shakes her head.*)

FAITH: I don't think she knows what we're saying!

CHARITY: Can't you understand us at all? (*The child looks at the food on the table, then looks toward* FAITH, *and points to her own mouth.*)

FAITH: What does she mean?

CHARITY: She means she's hungry. (*Laughs*) Here, little one. Sit down. (*She puts child into chair at right of table.* FAITH *sits in chair behind table.* CHARITY *goes around to left of table, pours milk into glass, and gives it to child with some gingerbread from the plate.*)

FAITH (*As child begins to eat*): She does seem hungry.

CHARITY: I wonder if she ever tasted ginger-cake before.

FAITH: She must have come from the Indians. But she's as white as we are!

CHARITY: Maybe the Indians captured her. Some white children have been adopted into tribes.

FAITH: She certainly doesn't belong in the settlement. We'd have seen her before this.

CHARITY: No. I don't think—(*Stops and looks up in alarm.*) What's that? (CHIEF THUNDERBIRD *enters silently. He is tall and dignified, dressed in a war-bonnet and blanket.*)

CHIEF: Girl. Mine. (FAITH *hides under the table. The child leaps up joyfully and runs to him. They go out together.*)

CHARITY: Well—of all things! (*Looking about*) Faith! Where are you?

FAITH: Are they gone? (*Rises slowly.*) Oh, Charity! Oh, my goodness! What will happen next? (JOHN *dashes into the room. He is a boy of thirteen, dressed in a plain white shirt and patched trousers.*)

JOHN: Oh! (*Stops in relief.*) Are you all right? We just drove in and Mother saw the Indian come out of the house.

FAITH: He hardly spoke to us. He just took the little girl and left.

JOHN: Girl? What girl?

FAITH: A little white girl in Indian clothes. I guess she was lost. We never saw her before. She came in and motioned for food.

CHARITY (*In sudden alarm*): What about Father and Mother? Do you suppose they're all right?

JOHN: I'll go back and see. (*He rushes out.*)

CHARITY (*Following him to the door*): Hurry, John!

FAITH (*Slowly going toward her sister*): Oh, I'm afraid to look out! Do you see anything?

CHARITY: Yes, it's moonlight. Father and the Indian are talking. The Indian is making signs.

FAITH: Do you think he's friendly?

CHARITY: Yes, I think so, but I don't know much about the sign language. He's going away now.

FAITH: Is the little girl with him?

CHARITY: Yes, she seems to like him. (*Turns back and walks to table. Begins to clear up the dishes the little girl used.*)

FAITH (*Dropping into chair at left of table*): I never was so scared in all my life! (*Enter* JOHN, *excitedly.*)

JOHN: Do you know who that big Indian is?

CHARITY: Who is he?

JOHN: Chief Thunderbird!

FAITH: *Thunderbird!*

JOHN: Yes, and the little girl is his adopted daughter. She's white, but her parents were killed in an Indian raid and the Chief took her for his own. I've heard people say that he calls her Little White Cloud and is very good to her. She must have wandered away from the camp.

CHARITY: I guess he was glad to find her, then.

JOHN: *Glad!* He's so glad because you two looked after her that he made signs of peace to Father. He's a powerful chief, you know. So I guess we don't have to fear the mountain Indians any more—thanks to you girls.

FAITH: I guess I *can* be thankful tomorrow—even with Indians around the house! (*They laugh together.*)

THE END

Thanksgiving Is for Everybody

by Jean Gould

Characters

PATSY	LING, *her twin brother*
POLLY	MRS. PRUDDEN
DAVID	MAILMAN
LEE PO	

TIME: *The week before Thanksgiving.*
SETTING: *In front of the Prudden home.*
AT RISE: PATSY, POLLY *and* DAVID *are sitting in the yard.*

POLLY: I wish he'd hurry.

PATSY: Maybe he won't have anything for us, anyway.

POLLY: Oh, Patsy, he's got to! It's the week before Thanksgiving!

DAVID: I'm tired of waiting. (*He gets up, takes a piece of chalk from his pocket, and starts drawing circles on the cement.*)

PATSY: Not on the walk, David.

DAVID: Mother said I could if I wash it off.

PATSY: Oh, all right; but don't mark up the whole sidewalk.

POLLY: I'm sure he'll have a letter.

PATSY: Well, if he does, I hope we get to go this year. Remember last year Daddy was too busy.

POLLY: And we didn't want to go and leave him all by himself on Thanksgiving.

DAVID (*Suddenly, looking off right*): Here he comes. Here comes the mailman!

PATSY *and* POLLY (*Standing up, looking to make sure*): He's here! He's here! (MAILMAN *enters, carrying some envelopes.*)

POLLY: And he's got a blue envelope.

DAVID (*Shouting*): A letter from Grandma! A letter from Grandma!

PATSY: We know what that means.

MAILMAN (*Handing her the envelope, smiling*): Give it to your mother right away. (*He exits, sorting mail.*)

PATSY: Don't worry, we will. (*Calling with the others*) Mother! (MRS. PRUDDEN *enters.*)

MRS. PRUDDEN: Was that the mailman, children? (PATSY *holds up the letter gleefully, gives it to* MRS. PRUDDEN *as the three crowd around their mother.*)

DAVID: It's from Grandma. Hurry, hurry, see what she says.

PATSY: Yes, do hurry, Mother.

MRS. PRUDDEN (*Laughing, starting to tear open the flap*): Don't get so excited, children. Stand back a little, so I can open the envelope. (*They move back from her, and she opens the letter, reads it through quickly, smiling.*)

DAVID: What does she say, Mummy?

MRS. PRUDDEN: Just what she usually says: this is an invitation to all of us for Thanksgiving dinner in the country; Grandpa will meet us at the train with the pony cart if the weather is warm, or with the sleigh if it's snowing.

PATSY (*Anxiously*): Oh, Mother, we *are* going this year, aren't we?

MRS. PRUDDEN (*Smiling*): I think so. (*Ad-lib shouts of "Hurrah! Goody! I can't wait," etc. from all three as they jump up and down.* PATSY *gives her mother a hug.*) My goodness! Such a racket. You'd better all run along and play now. I have lots of work to do. (*She exits. The children sit down again.*)

POLLY: What'll we do now?

DAVID (*Looking off left*): There are those two kids that came to live at the Chink's last week.

PATSY: You mean the Chinese people's, David.

DAVID: Oh, everybody calls the laundry "the Chink's."

PATSY: I know, but it's not nice.

DAVID: Why isn't it?

PATSY: Well . . . because "Chink" isn't their real name, I guess. They are Chinese, and people like to be called by their right names.

POLLY: What funny slanty eyes and straight black hair they have . . .

PATSY: I think they're kind of cute.

POLLY: But they're so dark . . .

PATSY: What's the difference?

POLLY: I don't know.

PATSY (*Standing up*): I'm going to speak to them. (*As a Chinese boy and girl enter left*) Hi! (LING PO *and his sister* LEE *come to stage center and stop.*)

LING: Hello.

LEE: Hello.

PATSY: What's your name?

LING: My name is Ling Po.

PATSY: Oh. (*There is a pause*) Mine is Patsy. This is my sister, Polly, and my brother, David.

LING (*Formally*): We are glad to meet you. This is my sister, Lee. (LEE *smiles.*)

POLLY (*Bursting out*): You speak plain English!

LING (*Pleased*): At the mission where we lived, we spoke only English.

LEE: The missionaries taught us. (*There is another pause. The children stand looking at each other.*)

DAVID (*Suddenly*): We're going to our Grandma's for Thanksgiving dinner! She lives in the country, and we may ride in a sleigh!

LING (*With oriental politeness*): That sounds very pleasant.

DAVID: It is, it is! And you have roast turkey, and pumpkin pie, and I'm going to get the drumstick. It's the best. (*They all laugh.*)

PATSY (*Poking* DAVID *in the stomach*): You don't make sense.

LING: You are speaking of a holiday?

PATSY: Mm-hm. Next Thursday.

LING: And what did you call it?

PATSY: Thanksgiving Day. It's one of our best holidays.

LING (*Repeating slowly*): Thanksgiving Day. This is right.

LEE: Will you tell us more, please?

PATSY: What do you mean?

LING: How did this nice holiday begin?

PATSY: Well, it started back in the days of the Pilgrims.

POLLY: They were the first people who came to America after Columbus.

DAVID (*Getting down on the sidewalk and drawing a picture with his piece of chalk*): Here's the way the Pilgrims looked. (LEE *and* LING *move over to him, watching.*) They wore high hats with buckles; and wide belts with buckles; and knee breeches, and shoes with buckles . . . there! We drew them in school.

LING: Yes . . . I see.

LEE: You are a good artist.

PATSY: The Pilgrims had to work very hard when they came to this country, planting seed for food, besides building their homes out of logs. Finally the harvest came, and it was a good one, and the people decided to set aside a special day besides Sunday to give thanks.

POLLY: After all the grain and fruit had been gathered in.

PATSY: That's right. And on this day, they used to walk to church in the morning, the father carrying a long rifle over his shoulder, in case there were any wild animals along the way.

DAVID (*Drawing again*): Here's the church, and here's the steeple.

PATSY: And then after church, they would come home and have a great feast. And that's all there is to it.

LING (*Exchanging a long look with* LEE): Lee, we have found one.

LEE: Yes, this is for us. Exactly what we wanted.

PATSY (*Curiously*): You mean you were looking for a holiday?

LING: Yes. You see, my sister and I were saying only this morning that we'd like to have a special day set aside, just to show how glad we were for being here in your country.

DAVID: I get it!

LEE: We feel we have an extra lot to be glad for. The mission, where our parents sent us from China, was in South Korea. We were very little then; the missionaries were kind parents to us. When the war came, we could not be happy any more.

LING: You do not know how terrible it is to hear bombing and shooting all the time.

LEE: Like a bad thunderstorm all the time.

LING: Only it does nothing but hurt; a thunderstorm brings rain to make the earth grow, but war tears it to pieces.

DAVID: Gee! It's a good thing you came here.

PATSY: I'm glad you came here, too.

POLLY: So am I.

LING: We thought we should set a day of our own to give thanks, and keep special every year, and here is your Thanksgiving Day, just for the purpose. (*Politely*) That is, if you don't mind.

PATSY: Of course not. Thanksgiving Day can be for anybody.

DAVID: Didn't the Chink—excuse me, I mean Mr. Chang—tell you about next Thursday?

LING: No, the Changs have not spoken about this holiday yet.

LEE: But they are very kind to us.

DAVID: Say, maybe you could come to Grandma's with us!

POLLY: Let's ask Mother.

PATSY: Yes, let's! Come on, Lee; come on, Ling. (*All the children start out*, LEE *and* LING *following slowly*.)

PATSY, POLLY *and* **DAVID** (*Calling*): Mother! Mother!

MRS. PRUDDEN (*Entering*): What is it, children?

PATSY: Mother, this is Lee and Ling Po. They came from Korea.

MRS. PRUDDEN: Why, how nice! Hello, children.

LEE *and* **LING**: Hello.

PATSY: They've never had a Thanksgiving Day, and we were wondering if . . .

DAVID: If they could come to Grandma's with us!

LING: We would like to make this fine holiday belong to us, too.

LEE: Because we are so thankful to be in your country now.

MRS. PRUDDEN: I see. I think all of us feel the same way.

DAVID: And if they come with us they can see how it works!

MRS. PRUDDEN: The idea sounds like a very good one to me. I think it can be arranged. (*Ad-lib cries of "Good!" "Oh, wonderful!" from the three Prudden children;* LEE *and* LING *smile shyly.*)

LING: We shall be so happy to share your Thanksgiving Day.

DAVID: And the turkey!

PATSY (*Thoughtfully*): I guess there's a lot more to Thanksgiving than the turkey.

DAVID: I know. (*To Ling*) But don't forget to ask for the other drumstick!

THE END

Thanks to Sammy Scarecrow

by Helen Littler Howard

Characters

SAMMY SCARECROW	SANDY SQUIRREL
MARI ELLEN	WALLY

TIME: *Thanksgiving Day.*

SETTING: *In a corn field.*

AT RISE: *On left stage center is* SAMMY SCARECROW. *He is quite dilapidated and hangs on to crossed sticks in a haphazard way.* SANDY SQUIRREL *is scurrying about the corn shock.*

SAMMY (*Sadly*):

Today is Thanksgiving,
But what need of living,
The crows have all flown away.

No more come they thieving,
And I am left grieving,
I'm useless this Thanksgiving Day.

That's a bit of poetry I made up. I have time for all sorts of thinking since I'm not looking after the corn any longer. This is a sad Thanksgiving Day for me. Nothing to be thankful for, I say. Nobody cares about a scarecrow when the corn is safely shocked. When one isn't busy doing something useful he can't be thankful.

SANDY (*Comes to* SCARECROW):
You're useful to me, old Sammy!

SAMMY: You're a thief, Sandy, and I don't call it being useful to help you in your stealing. I want to protect, not to harm.

SANDY: You won't tell on me, will you, Sammy? You can't because it's against rules to talk when anybody is near. I'm sorry for you, Sammy. You do look a bit worse for the wear. But I can't stay and talk. My Thanksgiving dinner is ready. I'll be back for dessert. (*Frisks off stage right.*)

SAMMY: Oh hum! I suppose I may as well take another nap. (*Pretends to go to sleep. Enter* WALLY *and* MARI ELLEN, *who is carrying a gaily decorated basket.*)

WALLY: What a surprise we have for Thanksgiving dinner!

MARI ELLEN: I'm glad we hid the nuts until Thanksgiving Day. Only this morning mother said it wouldn't seem like a Thanksgiving dinner without a basket of nuts. I could hardly keep from telling her.

WALLY: I'm glad you didn't. Secrets and surprises are lots of fun when you keep them secrets and surprises. (*Children go to the corn shock.* WALLY *kneels down and begins searching among the corn stalks.*) There must be a whole basketful here.

MARI ELLEN (*Kneels beside him*): There should be. We spent a half day gathering them. There were so few this year.

WALLY: I can't find any! That's queer.

MARI ELLEN (*Stands up and looks around*): Are you sure this is the right corn shock?

WALLY (*Stands too*): Yes. Don't you remember. It was the one nearest Sammy Scarecrow.

MARI ELLEN: Yes, I do remember. We chose it especially so Sammy could keep an eye on them.

WALLY: Much good it did. They aren't here.

MARI ELLEN (*Kneels again*): Let me look. No, I can't find any either. Can't blame Sammy, though. Poor fellow, one of his eyes is washed away by the rain and the other one is blurred.

WALLY: Maybe it was on the other side of the shock we hid them. (*Goes behind shock.*)

MARI ELLEN (*Goes to* SCARECROW): Now if Sammy could talk perhaps he could tell us what happened to those nuts. Couldn't you, Sammy? (SCARECROW *nods head.*) Look, Wally, he's nodding his head.

WALLY (*Comes from behind corn shock*): Who's nodding whose head?

MARI ELLEN: Sammy Scarecrow. I said perhaps he could tell us where the nuts are and he nodded his head.

WALLY (*Comes to* SCARECROW): It was only the wind blowing his head about.

MARI ELLEN: Well, maybe so. (*Examines* SCARECROW.) His neck is awfully wobbly. He's wobbly all over. Poor Sammy! He was so handsome when we put him out here. Now look at him. The wind and rain have made a bundle of rags of him.

WALLY (*Returns to corn shock*): Well, mooning about the old fellow won't help find those nuts.

MARI ELLEN: But I feel sorry for him. He spent his whole life guarding the corn, and now he's lonely and unhappy, and it's Thanksgiving Day!

WALLY: Well, how can we thank a scarecrow?

MARI ELLEN: We could take him home with us and fix him up. Then we could use him again next summer.

WALLY: Yes, we could. I'm sure the old fellow would like that. We could keep him in the barn.

MARI ELLEN: And I could mend his coat and paint eyes so he could see better.

WALLY: And I could find him another hat and some better shoes.

MARI ELLEN: Oh, Wally, let's do it! Let's show him we're thankful for what he's done for us!

WALLY: All right. But it doesn't make up for our lost surprise. We can't put him in our basket and put him on the table and say, "Surprise!"

MARI ELLEN: No, that would be a joke rather than a surprise.

WALLY: And jokes don't belong to Thanksgiving. That's Halloween. I do wish we could find those nuts! (*Begins looking again.*)

MARI ELLEN: I'm going to take him down. He must be tired hanging on to those crossed sticks. (*Begins to loosen* SCARECROW.)

WALLY: No use looking any more. There aren't any nuts there. I suppose we may as well go. (*Comes back to* SCARECROW.)

MARI ELLEN: Let's take Sammy with us.

WALLY: I guess we may as well make somebody thankful. (*As the children begin to loosen* SAMMY, SANDY SQUIRREL *peeps around the corn shock.*)

MARI ELLEN: Look, Wally, there's a squirrel.

WALLY: Sure enough. I'll bet he's the thief. He stole our nuts. Where do you suppose he put them?

MARI ELLEN: If Sammy could talk, I'm sure he could tell us. Couldn't you, Sammy? (SCARECROW *nods head.*)

WALLY: Say, it's funny that whenever you ask a question the wind blows Sammy's head up and down. (SQUIRREL *goes back behind corn shock.*)

MARI ELLEN: There, the squirrel's gone. He saw us.

WALLY: Come on. Let's take Sammy down. You take that side of him. . . . Look out, he's falling. (SCARECROW *tumbles down and nuts roll about him.*)

MARI ELLEN: See. He did know. The squirrel hid the nuts in his pockets. Look! His pockets are full of nuts!

WALLY: Sure enough. Sammy was guarding them for us. I'm glad you insisted that we take him along. (*Children gather up scattered nuts and put them in the basket.*)

MARI ELLEN: Sammy can carry the rest of them in his pockets and we'll help him along. How thankful we are to him for helping us and how thankful he'll be for our care. (*Children help* SAMMY *to his feet. He brightens up and looks happy. He tries to hold up his head which wobbles over now and then.*)

WALLY: We'll have nuts for our Thanksgiving dinner after all. Thanks to Sammy Scarecrow! (*Go out stage left.*)

SANDY (*Comes to center of stage and looks after them*):

There goes my dessert!
Today is Thanksgiving.
Sammy's glad he is living.
His friends are taking him away!

Because of my thieving
The children were grieving,
But now they are thankful and gay!

THE END

The Pop-Up Books

by Claribel Spamer

Characters

BOBBY	LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD
JIMMY	THE WOLF
THE GINGERBREAD BOY	THE GRANDMOTHER
THE OLD MAN	THE THREE BEARS
THE OLD WOMAN	THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

SETTING: *A schoolroom. Two large rectangular pieces of cardboard stand at left, slightly back of middle of stage, and two in a similar position at right. The titles "Little Red Riding Hood," "The Gingerbread Boy," "The Three Bears," and "The Three Little Pigs" are printed one on each.*

AT RISE: *The* GINGERBREAD BOY *pops out of one side of his book cover, the* OLD MAN *and* OLD WOMAN *out of the other side.*

GINGERBREAD BOY: Pop!

OLD MAN: Pop!

OLD WOMAN: Pop!

OLD MAN: Pop! (*They all pop back out of sight.* LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD *pops out of one side of her book, and the* GRANDMOTHER *and the* WOLF *pop out of the other side.*)

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: Pop!

WOLF: Pop!

GRANDMOTHER: Pop! (*They pop back out of sight. This same procedure is followed by the characters of each remaining book. Then all characters of all books pop out simultaneously.*)

ALL: POP! (*All pop out of sight.* BOBBY *and* JIMMY *enter at right.*)

BOBBY: All I hear is about Book Week, but I'm too little to read. The whole school is excited about it.

JIMMY (*Wistfully*): I don't read much yet either. The bigger boys and girls are reading extra books this week and making exhibits for the library.

BOBBY (*Proudly*): Well anyway, we have some new books! (*Points to book covers.*) The teacher brought them in this morning. Perhaps she will read them to us.

JIMMY (*Rushing up to each book and examining it*): Golly, Bobby, are you lucky! I have some like these at home. They are called pop-up books. You don't even have to know how to read. The pictures pop out at you when you open the pages, and they *show* you the story! Look! (*He touches the edge of "The Gingerbread Boy" cover, and the* GINGERBREAD BOY *runs out to center of stage, followed by the* OLD WOMAN *and the* OLD MAN. *The latter two chase the* GINGERBREAD BOY *all around the stage.*)

BOBBY (*Excitedly, jumping up and down*): Run, Gingerbread Boy! Run, Cooky, before they catch you and eat you! (*The three book people run back behind the book cover.*) Does he get away?

JIMMY: He gets away from the Old Man and Old Woman. But you will read it yourself someday. Now watch. (*He touches the edge of the "Little Red Riding Hood" cover.* LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD *strolls out from one side, and the* WOLF *from the other. They meet in the center of the stage. They make a pantomime greeting and* LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD *shows the* WOLF *the inside of her basket by turning back the cloth which covers it. Then they return behind the book cover.*)

BOBBY: I know that one! I've heard it from my Mother. The little girl went to her grandmother's, but the wolf was there ahead of her, dressed in the grandmother's night clothes.

JIMMY: He had eaten the grandmother up, but a woodsman came and killed the wolf, and the grandmother got out again. Look at this one. (*Touches edge of third book cover. The* THREE BEARS *tramp out, each carrying a bowl and spoon. They march to center of stage. In pantomime and one at a time, they pretend to taste the contents of their bowls. The first one claps hand to mouth and then fans tongue as if food were hot, the second makes a "brr" vibration with tongue as if food were cold, and the third pretends to eat greedily as if it were perfect food. Then they march back behind book.)*

BOBBY: These pop-up books are lots of fun! I am glad they make books now for little fellows too small to read. Now I really want to learn! I bet I'll read more books than anybody by the time I'm grown up!

JIMMY: Goldilocks is in that one too, but she is on another page. (*Goes to fourth book and touches edge*) Watch this! (*The* THREE LITTLE PIGS *march out, the first carrying straw, the second, sticks, and the third, some bricks. They go center of stage and set to work as if they were all going to build houses. The* FIRST PIG *tries to pile the straw, the* SECOND PIG *to tie his sticks together, the* THIRD PIG *to pile his bricks one on another. They pull little hammers or saws or any other tools from their pockets.*)

BOBBY (*Excitedly dashing forward toward them*): Oh, let me help you! (*They look at him with startled expressions, then pick up their things and scamper hastily behind their book cover.*) Oh, dear! I scared them.

JIMMY: It doesn't matter. They'll come out again when your teacher shows the books to you. (*Takes* BOBBY'S *hand*) Come on to my room, and see *our* new books. (*They exit at left.* GINGERBREAD BOY *comes out from behind his cover.*)

GINGERBREAD BOY (*Strutting leisurely*): I fooled that Old Man and Old Woman. I didn't go back inside the book at all, so they can't possibly catch me and eat me now. (*Gesturing with hands*) They can't get out; I can't get in—so I'm safe. Everybody *thought* I went back inside when the old people did, but, instead, I hid *in back* of the book, *outside* the back cover. Guess I'll just look around. (*Starts to strut around, very proud of himself. Noise offstage at left*) Oh dear, what shall I do? (*With panic*) I can't let anyone find me! I *must* be back inside. (*Goes to book cover but apparently can't get in.*) Oh dear! I am *truly* a runaway now. (*Runs offstage at right.* JIMMY *and* BOBBY *re-enter at left.*)

BOBBY: Your books were nice, Jimmy, but I like ours best. I'm going to open "The Gingerbread Boy" myself. (*Goes to cover and touches edge.* OLD MAN *and* OLD WOMAN *run out and, perplexed, run in circles and then run back behind cover.*) Where's the Gingerbread Boy? He wasn't there!

JIMMY: Oh, my goodness, he must've broken off the page and fallen out! We must see if we can find him and put him back before your teacher comes. She would feel sad if her new books were broken. (*They hunt all about the stage, around the book covers. While they are absorbed,* GINGERBREAD BOY *sneaks in at right.* BOBBY *turns and sees him, and he stands motionless.*)

BOBBY (*Running to him*): Here he is! Help me put him back. (JIMMY *and* BOBBY *take the* GINGERBREAD BOY *by the hands and lead him to his cover.* JIMMY *touches the cover, and the* GINGERBREAD BOY *goes behind it.*)

JIMMY: There! That was a close one. I hear the teacher now.

BOBBY: But haven't we had fun! I sure like Book Week. (*They exit at left.* GINGERBREAD BOY *pops out.*)

GINGERBREAD BOY: Pop, what fun! Pop, what fun! We are liked by the little one. (*Pops back. All pop out as at the beginning.*)

ALL: Pop, we make a lot of joy
For every little girl and boy.

(*They pop back out of sight. Curtain*)

THE END

Christmas Party

by Mildred Hark and Noel McQueen

Characters

SANTA CLAUS	FATHER
BOY	COWBOY DOLL
GIRL	MAMA DOLL
LADY	TEDDY BEAR
MARY	TIN SOLDIER
MOTHER	JACK-IN-THE-BOX

TIME: *Christmas Eve.*

SETTING: *The toy section of a department store. At right is a counter full of toys. At left is an easy chair, a brightly decorated Christmas tree, and a sign reading: "Don't forget to say hello to Santa."*

AT RISE: SANTA *is seated in chair at left talking to a* BOY *and* GIRL.

GIRL: You will be sure not to miss our house, Santa?

BOY: And don't forget what we want, Santa.

SANTA CLAUS: Now, now, don't you worry. Everything will be taken care of. (*A* LADY *enters left.*)

LADY: Children, it's getting late. You'll have to say good-bye to Santa now.

BOY: Good-bye, Santa.

LADY: And thank Santa for taking care of you while I shopped.

GIRL: Thank you, Mr. Santa, and good-bye.

SANTA CLAUS (*Waving to them*): Good-bye. Merry Christmas. (LADY, BOY *and* GIRL *go off left as* MOTHER, FATHER *and* MARY *enter.*)

MOTHER: My, it is getting late and there are still some things I must get.

MARY: Mother, I'm tired. (*Sees* SANTA) Oh, look, here's Santa!

SANTA CLAUS: Hello, little girl. What's your name?

MARY: Mary. Mary Simpson.

FATHER: How do you do, Mr. Santa Claus. I wonder if we could leave Mary here with you for a few minutes?

SANTA: Oh, I think so.

MOTHER: That would be nice, Mr. Santa. She's tired and we're not quite finished with our shopping.

SANTA CLAUS (*Rising*): Well, I guess I could care for just one more little girl today. It's getting late though—hardly anyone is left in the store so you'll have to hurry. (*Taking* MARY'S *hand*) Come on, Mary, let's sit over here. (*He starts to lead her to chair.*)

MOTHER *and* FATHER: Thank you, Santa. (*They go off left.*)

MARY (*Seeing toys*): Oh, look at the toy drum and the toy piano.

SANTA CLAUS: Yes, there are plenty of toys. (*He points off right.*) Look at them—see that wonderful teddy bear and the tin soldier.

MARY (*Looking off too*): And what's in that big red box?

SANTA CLAUS: Why, Jack, of course. Jack's in the box.

MARY: And where are the Mama dolls?

SANTA CLAUS: Right there behind the counter—and a cowboy doll with ten-gallon hat!

MARY (*Looking back of counter*): Oh, he's cute. I—I guess I'll play with the dolls. (*Sleepily*) That is, I would if I weren't so sleepy.

SANTA CLAUS: You're all tired out. (*He leads her to chair.*) You had better rest a bit. (MARY *sits on* SANTA'S *knee.*) There, we're all cozy.

MARY: Yes, Mr. Santa, it's wonderful staying here with you, but I hope I'm not keeping you from your work.

SANTA CLAUS: My work?

MARY: I mean it's Christmas Eve, and shouldn't you be out delivering toys? What about your trip?

SANTA CLAUS: Now, now, don't you worry about my trip, Mary.

MARY: But it *is* getting late. Where are your reindeer?

SANTA CLAUS (*Yawning*): Don't you worry about them either. You just rest until your parents get back.

MARY (*Sleepily*): My, I am tired. But I can't help thinking of all the other children in the world. Here you are with me and they're waiting for you to visit them tonight.

SANTA CLAUS: Now, now, there's plenty of time. You just rest and think about the toys. The doll with the big blue eyes that says Mama.

MARY (*Closing her eyes*): Hmmmm.

SANTA CLAUS (*Closing his eyes too*): Blue eyes . . . Mama. . . . (MARY *and* SANTA *fall asleep.* COWBOY DOLL *comes out from behind counter.*)

COWBOY DOLL: You can come out now, all of you. The coast is clear!

MAMA DOLL: Are you sure?

COWBOY DOLL: Of course I'm sure. Everything is quiet. (MAMA DOLL *comes out, steps to center of stage.*)

MAMA DOLL: *Ma-ma! Ma-ma! Ma-ma!*

COWBOY DOLL: You don't have to say that any more. Everybody's gone now. It's time for the toys to have their party.

MAMA DOLL: Goody! Goody! The toys' tea party! But where is everybody? Where is the Teddy Bear, and where is the Tin Soldier?

TEDDY BEAR (*Calling from off stage*): Halloo! Halloo! Halloo! (*Comes tumbling onto stage and turns a few somersaults*)

COWBOY DOLL: Hello, Teddy Bear! (*He slaps* TEDDY BEAR *on the back, and* TEDDY BEAR *squeaks.*)

TEDDY BEAR: Don't hit me. My squeaker is almost worn out from children squeezing me.

COWBOY DOLL: Well, they've all gone home now.

MAMA DOLL: Yes, and I'm getting ready for our party. (*She runs* *off right and returns with small table and set of dishes. She places table near center of stage and begins to set it.*)

TEDDY BEAR: Where are the Tin Soldier and Jack-in-the-box?

TIN SOLDIER (*Calling off stage*): Help! Help! Help!

COWBOY DOLL: Oh, there is the Tin Soldier. But he can't come to the party till we wind him up. (*He runs off stage.*)

MAMA DOLL: Come, Teddy. You and I can get Jack-in-the-box. (*They run off stage and return at once shoving a large red box.*)

MAMA DOLL *and* TEDDY BEAR (*Singing to tune of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush"*):

Here we come with Jack-in-the-box,
Jack-in-the-box, Jack-in-the-box!
Here we come with Jack-in-the-box!
He'll pop up in just a minute!

(TIN SOLDIER *enters. He marches stiffly as* COWBOY DOLL *winds him up with a big key.*)

COWBOY DOLL: There you are, Tin Soldier.

TIN SOLDIER (*Marching about*): Now I can march to my heart's content.

MAMA DOLL: You look very handsome in your uniform.

JACK-IN-THE-BOX (*From inside box*): Let me out! Let me out!

COWBOY DOLL: We forgot all about Jack! (*They open the box, and out* JACK-IN-THE-BOX *jumps.*)

JACK-IN-THE-BOX: Here I come! What's the idea of keeping me cooped up in my box? I've missed half the party!

MAMA DOLL: Nothing of the kind! We've just started. (COWBOY DOLL *rides hobbyhorse and tries to lasso* TEDDY BEAR *who is turning somersaults.* TIN SOLDIER *takes drum from counter and starts to play it as he marches about.* MAMA DOLL *plays on toy piano.* JACK-IN-THE-BOX *dances.*)

MARY (*Stealing down off* SANTA'S *lap and rubbing her eyes*): Mama Doll! Tin Soldier! Do you mind if I come to your party?

MAMA DOLL (*Alarmed*): A little girl! I thought everyone had gone home! (*Toys all stop their action.*)

TEDDY BEAR: Maybe she's just make-believe.

COWBOY DOLL: Maybe she came out of the storybooks on the next counter.

MAMA DOLL: Of course that's it! (*To* MARY) It's all right. You may come to our party.

MARY: Thank you very much.

MAMA DOLL: We're just about to have refreshments. (*Takes teapot and pretends to fill cups*) Won't you have some tea?

MARY: I don't like tea.

MAMA DOLL: It's really pink lemonade. See?

MARY (*Peering into cup*): I don't see anything!

MAMA DOLL: Silly girl! She doesn't see anything in the cup!

COWBOY DOLL (*Passing empty plate*): Have some cakes. They're L. P. cakes.

TIN SOLDIER (*Pretending to take one*): L. P. cakes! They are the best kind.

MAMA DOLL: Everything is L. P. That's why it all tastes so good!

MARY: What does L. P. mean?

TIN SOLDIER: Let's pretend. This is Let's Pretend cake. If you don't like chocolate, you can have angel food. Here. (*Passes plate to* MARY)

MARY (*Pretending to take a piece*): This is fun! (TEDDY BEAR *turns somersaults and sings to tune of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush."*)

TEDDY BEAR (*Singing*):

Come on, turn a fancy somersault,
Somersault, somersault!
Come on, turn a fancy somersault.
Have a good time at the party!

COWBOY DOLL (*Riding hobbyhorse and singing to same tune*):

Did you ever ride a hobbyhorse,
Hobbyhorse, hobbyhorse?
Did you ever ride a hobbyhorse?
Have a good time at the party!

MAMA DOLL (*Playing toy piano and singing*):

Oh, let's play a jolly little tune,
Little tune, little tune!
Oh, let's play a jolly little tune,
Have a good time at the party!

TIN SOLDIER (*Marching, beating drum and singing*):

A rat-a-tat-tat, we'll march along,
March along, march along.
A rat-a-tat-tat, we'll march along,
Have a good time at the party!

JACK-IN-THE-BOX (*Jumping up and down and singing*):

Oh, let's jump up and down for joy.
Yes, for joy! Yes, for joy!
Oh, let's jump up and down for joy!
Have a good time at the party!

ALL TOYS (*Singing*):

Let's all be as merry as merry can be,
Merry can be, merry can be.
Let's all be as merry as merry can be!
Have a good time at the party!

MARY (*Laughing*): I'm having a good time. (*To* MAMA DOLL) Won't you please say "Mama" for me?

MAMA DOLL: She wants me to say "Mama."

TEDDY BEAR: Oh, dear me!

MARY: And may I put Jack into his box and make him pop up?

TIN SOLDIER: She wants to play with us! (*Places toy drum on counter*)

MAMA DOLL: She didn't come out of the storybooks after all!

JACK-IN-THE-BOX: She's real! (*Jumps into his box*)

TEDDY BEAR: We've got to run away. (COWBOY DOLL *places hobbyhorse against counter.* TEDDY BEAR *and* TIN SOLDIER *close* JACK'S *box and push him off.* MAMA DOLL *follows with table and dishes.* MARY *backs left, rubbing her eyes. She sits on* SANTA'S *knee again. There is silence for a moment.* SANTA CLAUS *opens his eyes, yawns, then starts.*)

MARY (*Waking up*): Oh, Santa Claus, you've been asleep, and while you were asleep the toys gave a party.

SANTA CLAUS: Party? I think you have been asleep too—asleep and dreaming.

MARY: But you're real, Santa Claus. I didn't dream you!

SANTA CLAUS: No, you didn't dream me. Your mother and father left you here.

MARY: Yes, and I wish they would hurry back.

SANTA CLAUS: What? You're not having a good time?

MARY: Oh, I'm having a wonderful time, but it's getting later and later and you haven't been on your trip.

SANTA CLAUS: There is still time.

MARY: But you have so many presents to deliver—so many places to go.

SANTA CLAUS: It seems like a big job to most people but for Santa Claus it's easy.

MARY: That's good. I wouldn't want you to miss anyone because of taking care of me.

SANTA CLAUS: Don't worry. I think I hear your mother and father now. (MARY'S FATHER *and* MOTHER *enter left.*)

FATHER: Mr. Santa Claus, the elevators had stopped running and we had to walk up.

MOTHER: I'm sorry we're so late.

SANTA CLAUS: That's all right. We had a good time, didn't we, Mary?

MARY: Oh, yes. And Mother, Daddy, I'm glad you *are* late. While you were gone, the toys gave a party.

MOTHER: What are you talking about, Mary?

SANTA CLAUS: Mary has been asleep. She must have had a beautiful dream.

FATHER: We certainly thank you for taking care of her. I guess we had better hurry now. The store's closing up.

MOTHER: I hope we didn't keep you too long, Santa Claus.

MARY: Don't worry, Mother. He says he still has time to go on his trip.

SANTA CLAUS: Of course I have.

MARY: And you will come to our house?

SANTA CLAUS: I certainly will. You'll be sound asleep but I'll be there.

MARY: Then everything is all right. Oh, Christmas is wonderful.

SANTA CLAUS: Yes, it is. There is magic in Christmas. A merry Christmas to you all!

THE END

The Children of Chocolate Street

by Eleanora Bowling Kane

Characters

JIMMIE	YOUNG WOMAN
JESSIE	YOUNG BOY
MISS KREBS	SMALL GIRL
FAIRY	WOMAN
SARAH	MARY

SETTING: *Miss Krebs' Kandy Kitchen.*

AT RISE: *A bell over the door tinkles and* JIMMIE *and* JESSIE *enter hesitantly. They look around slowly.*

JESSIE: Jimmie, I don't know why, but I don't like *this* candy store. (*Reads sign over counter*) "Miss Krebs' Kandy Kitchen." (*Looks around*) Not a Christmas decoration in the whole place. But I'm sure this is where Mother told us to come for her Christmas candy.

JIMMIE (*Smacking his lips*): Candy! Oh, boy, how I love it. *Any* candy store looks good to me, Jessie. What are we going to buy?

JESSIE: Don't you ever think of anything but your stomach? We didn't come here to get candy for ourselves. Mother ordered all her Christmas candy from Miss Krebs—some special red and white mints, candy canes, and chocolate buttercreams. (JIMMIE *rubs his stomach with delight.*)

JIMMIE: Don't we get *any* candy *now?*

JESSIE: Oh, I guess Miss Krebs will give us something, Jimmie.

You know Miss Mamie always did in that little store that used to be near us.

JIMMIE: Miss Mamie gave me a lollipop once. Say, I wonder where this Krebs person is?

JESSIE: Hush, Jimmie, I hear someone. I think she's coming now.

MISS KREBS (*Entering, peering sharply over her spectacles at the children. She is grim and sour-faced*): Well, you two have been in here a long time by yourselves. Have you been stealing my candy?

JESSIE (*Faltering*): Are . . . are *you* Miss Krebs?

MISS KREBS: I am. What do you want, little girl?

JIMMIE (*Aside*): Miss Crab would be a better name.

JESSIE (*To* JIMMIE): Hush, Jimmie. (*To* MISS KREBS) I'm Jessie Barclay. I came for the Christmas candy my mother ordered . . . red and white mints, and candy canes and . . .

MISS KREBS (*Interrupting*): I know what she ordered. But you'll have to wait. I haven't put all the Christmas orders in the boxes yet. I'll go back in the kitchen and pack them now. (*She starts to leave reluctantly, then stops and turns*) But I hate to leave you two alone with all this Christmas stuff in the store. You can't trust children.

JIMMIE: Gee, if your candy's as bitter as your tongue, we don't want any.

JESSIE: Jimmie, that's rude. (JIMMIE *shrugs and wanders over to a counter. To* MISS KREBS) We're sorry, Miss Krebs. And you can trust us.

MISS KREBS (*Starting to exit*): I hate to do it . . . but don't you children touch anything in this store.

JESSIE (*Calls after her*): Of course not, Miss Krebs. We'll just look.

JIMMIE: And you can start looking right here. (*Holds up candy box*) Did you ever see a candy box like this, Jessie?

JESSIE (*Takes box*): No, I don't think so, Jimmie. (*Reading*) "Goodies from Chocolate Street." Isn't that a cute name!

JIMMIE: I like the picture on the box. Look, there's a street with houses all made of chocolate and there are. . . . (*Music starts off and a voice picks up* JIMMIE's *lines.*)

FAIRY (*Continuing*): There are lollipop lamp posts all aglow,
And peppermint trees in an orderly row.
Oh, Chocolate Street is the place to go.

JESSIE: Jimmie, did you hear that?

JIMMIE: It was just what I was going to say. Someone took the words right out of my mouth.

JESSIE: Do you think there's a music box inside this candy box?

JIMMIE: No. It isn't heavy enough. Quiet, Jess, here comes Miss Krebs.

MISS KREBS (*Entering and holding out a large box to* JESSIE): Here's your mother's order, little girl. I hope you didn't touch anything.

JESSIE: No—only this box of candy.

MISS KREBS (*Angry*): I told you children to keep your hands off. (*Stops suddenly*) *What* box?

JESSIE (*Pointing*): This one that says "Goodies from Chocolate Street."

MISS KREBS (*Weakly*): That again! No! (*Music starts off*)

FAIRY (*Off*): The houses are candy bars long and low
There are lollipop lamp posts all aglow
And peppermint trees in an orderly row.
Oh, Chocolate Street is the place to go!

JIMMIE: There it is again.

JESSIE: Miss Krebs, did you hear it too?

MISS KREBS (*Nervously*): Hear what? I didn't hear anything. The idea. (*Aside*) "Chocolate Street is the place to go." I just imagined it, this time and other times too. (*To children*) Now, you children run along.

JIMMIE: The lady who ran the candy store in our block always gave us a piece of candy when we went there . . . and *especially* at Christmas time.

MISS KREBS: Well, I don't give things away. I never did and

I'm not starting at this late date. Now, go on home. (*The music is heard again.*)

FAIRY: There are marshmallow sofas.
You take your ease.
On Chocolate Street
We aim to please.

MISS KREBS (*Angry*): That's enough! Here . . . you children take this old box of candy with you. Go on . . . take it . . . and get out. (*She thrusts the box into* JIMMIE'S *hands. The children back fearfully toward the door and* MISS KREBS, *with a geature of despair, hurries off to the kitchen. When she has gone the children stop and look at each other in surprise.*)

JESSIE: Now what in the world! Jimmie, I think she *did* hear that voice, and she's scared silly.

JIMMIE: Mean old crab. Anyway, we got a nice box of candy out of her. (*Reads*) "Goodies from Chocolate Street." Well, what's to stop us from having some?

JESSIE: I guess it's all right, as long as Miss Krebs gave it to us. I'd like a chocolate marshmallow if you can find one. (JIMMIE *hands her the box top and searches for a marshmallow.* JESSIE *studies the picture on the box*) Say, Jimmie, you know this picture on the box top is very pretty.

JIMMIE (*Pointing to candy*): Here's a chocolate marshmallow. (*Looks at box top*) Yep, it *is* kinda pretty. You know what it looks like . . . like a village under a Christmas tree.

JESSIE: Or maybe a place in Fairyland.

JIMMIE (*Munching candy*): I sure would like to go to Chocolate Street. Just think, Jess! The houses there are all made of chocolate bars.

JESSIE: And the lamp posts are lollipops . . .

JIMMIE: And the trees are peppermint sticks . . . (*The music is heard again.*)

FAIRY: And each paving stone is a chocolate drop,
And the fountains all gush forth soda pop.

JIMMIE (*Delighted*): There it is again.

JESSIE: Jimmie, I've thought of a rhyme too. Listen.

The houses are full of chocolate creams.
And children may visit there in their dreams. (*There is gay music, and the* FAIRY *dances in. She stops and curtsies to the children.*)

FAIRY: I'm the Candy Fairy, children.

JESSIE: Candy Fairy!

FAIRY: The Candy Fairy from Chocolate Street. Congratulations, Jessie. You did just the right thing to take yourself and Jimmie to Chocolate Street.

JESSIE: *I* did, Candy Fairy?

FAIRY: Of course. Your little rhyme did the trick, Jessie.

JESSIE: You mean I worked magic, all by myself?

FAIRY: Only at Christmastime could it ever happen, Jessie . . . and this is what I can do for you: I can transport both you and Jimmie to Chocolate Street.

JIMMIE: Oh, boy! Then, we could eat candy, and eat candy, and eat candy . . .

FAIRY (*Interrupting*): Or . . . I could stay here with you and help you to do a good deed for Christmas.

JIMMIE (*Alarmed*): But there's all that candy on Chocolate Street.

JESSIE (*Firmly*): Jimmie! I'm ashamed of you. Candy Fairy, can't we do something about Miss Krebs? Here it is Christmas Eve, and she hasn't any Christmas spirit at all.

FAIRY: That's a fine idea, Jessie. It may interest you to know that we of Chocolate Street have had our eye on Miss Krebs for a long time.

JIMMIE: She certainly was scared when she heard your voice saying those rhymes about Chocolate Street.

FAIRY: Yes, I think I worried her considerably.

JIMMIE: Then let's worry her some more.

FAIRY: Very well, but first I must make us all invisible. One wave of my magic peppermint wand . . . (*She waves wand*) and *presto!*

We can now see each other but we shall be unseen by anyone else.

JESSIE: Here comes somebody else, right now, Candy Fairy. (*The bell jangles and a frightened little girl enters.*)

FAIRY: Let's stand over here, children, and watch. (*They go upstage and watch the little girl.*)

MISS KREBS (*Entering*): Well, what is it? I'm very busy in my kitchen. Hurry up, now. What do you want?

SARAH: Miss Krebs, I—I found two pennies in the street—and I've never tasted chocolates like those you have in your window —and . . .

MISS KREBS: Well! So what!

SARAH: I thought—I was hoping—oh, could you sell me just *half* of one of those chocolates for these two pennies?

MISS KREBS: Sell you half of one of my delicious candies! Well of all the nerve! Of course not.

SARAH: Oh, please Miss Krebs. It's Christmas Eve.

MISS KREBS: And don't I know it, with all the work I have to do. Now you get out of here! Go on, get out!

FAIRY: Come on, Jessie. You say a rhyme. (*The music is heard in the background.*)

JESSIE: The people are kind on *Chocolate Street.*
They don't mind giving a child a treat.
And the poorer the child, the more they give.
That's the way that people should live.

SARAH: What was that? Your radio?

MISS KREBS (*Frightened and confused*): Radio! No, of course not. Yes! Yes—it was a radio! I'll put cotton in my ears so I won't hear it. It *has* to be a radio. (*The music is heard again.*)

JESSIE: It's conscience, Miss Krebs—and it speaks for years,
You can't shut it out by closing your ears.

MISS KREBS: No, it can't be. Go away! Go away!

JIMMIE: Congratulations, Jessie.

FAIRY: Good work, Jess. Look at Miss Krebs.

MISS KREBS: Here, child! Here! Take your half piece of candy. Take it—only get out.

SARAH: Oh, thank you! Here are my two pennies. (*The music is heard*)

JESSIE: You can't take the child's money.

MISS KREBS (*Interrupts as music stops abruptly*): I can't stand it. Here—take a whole candy! Take *two* candies—take a *whole* pound—and keep your pennies.

SARAH: Oh, how wonderful! A whole pound of candy. Oh, thank you, dear Miss Krebs. (*Takes candy and exits.*)

FAIRY: Dear Miss Krebs indeed! The next time it's your turn, Jimmie.

JIMMIE: Gee, look! Here comes a woman. (*Bell jangles and a* YOUNG WOMAN *enters.*)

MISS KREBS (*Pulling herself together*): Well, what can I do for you?

YOUNG WOMAN: I'd like to inquire the price of those boxes of chocolate creams.

MISS KREBS: They're two dollars a box.

YOUNG WOMAN: Oh, oh—I'm *so* disappointed. You see this is probably my grandmother's last Christmas. She's 90 years old and she says she has never had enough chocolate creams in her whole life. So I thought I might buy her a whole box just for herself.

MISS KREBS: Well?

YOUNG WOMAN: But—two dollars and there's the rent and the gas bill due today. No—I guess I just can't afford it.

MISS KREBS: The idea of your taking my time and not buying anything. (*The music is heard.*)

JIMMIE: You're a lucky woman—with a chance like this.
A chance to give happiness, cheer, and bliss. (MISS KREBS' *hand flutters to her throat.*)

YOUNG WOMAN: Why, what was that?

MISS KREBS: Nothing—everything—I don't know. Look! Take the box to your grandmother. Take her two boxes as a Christmas gift. Here . . . (*Gives boxes*)

YOUNG WOMAN: Why, what a wonderful Christmas spirit. (*She exits.*) Thank you ever so much. (*The bell jangles and a little* BOY *enters.*)

MISS KREBS (*Weakly*): Yes, what do you want, little boy?

BOY: I want some good candy for some poor children. My club is preparing a gift box for poor children and I've been saving my allowance.

MISS KREBS: How much money have you?

BOY: I have only fifty cents.

MISS KREBS: And you expect to buy good candies for that? (*Music plays only a few chords when* MISS KREBS *breaks in.*) That's enough! Whoever you are—you don't have to say anything. Here, little boy, take all you want for the poor children. Take this tin of hard candies and this can of salted nuts—and these chocolate bars . . . and this expensive assortment. (*Gives candy to* BOY)

BOY: Gee! Thanks a million. (*He exits saying*) Wait'll the fellows see this. (*The bell jangles and a* WOMAN *and a little* GIRL *enter.*)

WOMAN (*Pleasantly*): Good evening, Miss Krebs. My little girl would like to buy a lollipop.

MISS KREBS (*Hurriedly*): Oh, no, I'll give it to her. Here, little girl— I love to give candy away . . . especially at Christmas.

GIRL: Oh, goodie, thank you ever so much.

WOMAN: Why, how nice of you, Miss Krebs. Come on, dear. Now wasn't that nice of Miss Krebs? (*They exit.* MISS KREBS *opens the cash register and shakes her head at the money.*)

JIMMIE: Look at the old miser, counting her money.

FAIRY: Never mind, Jimmie. I think we've almost accomplished our goal. (*The bell jangles and* MARY *enters.*)

MARY: Miss Krebs, is my mother's Christmas order ready? I'll take it if it is.

MISS KREBS: Yes, of course—and while I'm out in the kitchen, Mary—you help yourself to any candy you want on that counter.

MARY: Oh, my goodness! Anything, Miss Krebs?

MISS KREBS (*To herself*): Strange, I didn't hear the mysterious voice with any of the last people. I believe . . . yes, I really do believe I know why. Yes, Mary help yourself to *anything you want.* (*As* MISS KREBS *exits* MARY *helps herself to a generous assortment of candies.*)

MARY: Miss Krebs *never* did anything like *this* before. Let's see. I'll take some of these, and some of these, and some of these . . . and I'll take some for my little brother.

MISS KREBS (*Entering with box*): Here's your mother's Christmas order, Mary. That's right, dear. I'm glad you helped yourself. It's a Christmas present from the Krebs Kandy Kitchen. (MARY *takes box.*)

MARY: Oh, thank you, Miss Krebs. I hope you have a nice Christmas. (*Exits*)

MISS KREBS (*Slowly*): A—nice—Christmas. (*The music is heard again.*)

FAIRY: Farewell, Miss Krebs, we'll come no more,
Chocolate Street's now inside your door
A happy place for old and young,
O'er all the town your praise is sung.

MISS KREBS: *This* time the music sounds sweet to me. The voice is lovely . . . and what it says is lovelier still. Well, I've got to be off now. It's Christmas Eve, and I've lots to do to get ready for tomorrow. (*She exits.*)

JESSIE: Isn't it wonderful! Now Miss Krebs won't be crabby any more. Candy Fairy, your magic is wonderful.

FAIRY: It's the magic of Christmas, Jessie.

JESSIE: Well, I've had a wonderful Christmas Eve, haven't you, Jimmie?

JIMMIE: Oh, sure, but you know Jess, I'm just a *wee* bit sorry we never did get to Chocolate Street. Remember—it had chocolate bar houses . . . and peppermint trees . . . and we didn't get any of them.

FAIRY: But you did a fine deed this evening, Jimmie.

JESSIE: And we still have the "Goodies from Chocolate Street" . . . and you know what we can do when *they're* all gone, Jimmie?

JIMMIE: No, what?

JESSIE: We can come right down here to Miss Krebs' Kandy Kitchen again.

JIMMIE: To that old crab!

FAIRY: Not a crab any longer. Remember, Jimmie, things are different here now!

THE END

The Lonely Fir Tree

by Helen M. Roberts

Characters

FIR TREE	WHITEY, *the rabbit*
OAK TREE	BOB — *children*
WEEPING WILLOW	DICK — *children*
MR. SPARROW	MARY — *children*
MRS. SPARROW	SUE — *children*

SETTING: *The forest.*

TIME: *Christmas.*

AT RISE: *The* OAK TREE *and* WEEPING WILLOW *are close to each other. Since it is winter they have no leaves. The* FIR TREE *stands by herself. The trees sway back and forth a moment in the breeze before* FIR TREE *speaks.*

FIR TREE: Oh, Mr. Oak Tree! (*No answer.*) Miss Weeping Willow!

WEEPING WILLOW (*Dabbing her eyes with her scarf*): What is it, little Fir Tree?

FIR TREE: My mother went off on a visit last year, and I'm so lonely over here all by myself. Do you mind if I move nearer you?

WEEPING WILLOW (*Hesitantly*): Well—er—

OAK TREE (*Scolding*): Now, see here, Weeping Willow! This is *our* spot! Why, I've stood here for hundreds of years—

WEEPING WILLOW: But she's so little, and so—so . . .

OAK TREE: Be still! You're too soft-hearted, Weeping Willow. That little Fir Tree doesn't belong in our class.

Weeping Willow: You may be right.

Oak Tree: Of course I'm right. I always am! After all, a tree should learn *something* in hundreds of years.

Weeping Willow: Yes—but—

Oak Tree: No buts about it. Why just look at her. *She* has needles instead of leaves.

Weeping Willow: But we've lost all our leaves—

Oak Tree: Of course! Of course! All self-respecting trees lose their leaves in winter.

Weeping Willow: But maybe she can't help it.

Oak Tree: That makes no difference. I knew her mother and her grandparents and her great grandparents and her—

Weeping Willow: Oh you're so wonderful, Oak Tree.

Oak Tree (*Smiling and swaying as he whispers proudly*): In fact, *I'm* the monarch tree in the forest.

Fir Tree (*Calling softly again*): Oh Weeping Willow!

Oak Tree (*Sharply*): Pay no attention to that upstart! Look! I'll turn my back on her. We can't be bothered with her. (*Turns his back*)

Weeping Willow (*Meekly as she weeps*): Whatever you say, Oak Tree.

Oak Tree: Look! Here come those ugly sparrows! Don't pay any attention to them. They're such a nuisance.

Weeping Willow: Why didn't they leave with the other birds?

Oak Tree (*Tossing his head and shrugging his shoulders*): I'm sure I don't know. I've never been interested enough to find out.

Mr. Sparrow (*Comes in flapping his wings and followed by* Mrs. Sparrow): Oh, Mr. Oak Tree! We're so cold! May we rest in the shelter of your big branches?

Oak Tree: Certainly not! You built a nest in my twigs last summer, but you're not welcome now. Scat! Scat!

Mrs. Sparrow: Oh dear! How can you be so unkind?

Mr. Sparrow: You'll help us, won't you, Weeping Willow? Your weeping branches would keep the wind away.

WEEPING WILLOW (*Swaying and weeping*): Well—er—I don't know.

OAK TREE: Well I do! You ugly sparrows can't sing. You're no good for anything. (*Laughs cruelly*) Perhaps that "lonely" Fir Tree would like your company. (*He points toward the* FIR *without facing her. The* FIR TREE *looks toward the* SPARROWS *and beckons to them. While the dialogue is going on near the* FIR TREE *the other trees sway and whisper together.*)

MR. SPARROW: Why, of course! I didn't see her. Come on, my dear.

MRS. SPARROW: I do believe she's telling us to come! (*They hop and fly toward* FIR.)

FIR TREE (*Whispering loudly*): Do come, little Sparrows! See, my branches are thick and green.

MR. SPARROW: So they are. Thank you very much, Fir Tree.

MRS. SPARROW (*Close to* FIR): This is much better. Shall we sing for you?

FIR TREE: That would be very nice. But tell me! Have you had your dinner?

MRS. SPARROW: Dinner! What's that? We haven't had breakfast, lunch, or dinner for two whole days.

MR. SPARROW: And we're quite hungry.

FIR TREE: Good! You're hungry and I'm lonely. Yesterday, some children came by here and threw a sandwich from their lunch pails.

MR. SPARROW: A sandwich! What's that?

FIR TREE: Why, it's bread—and cheese. I picked it up and put it in a pocket in my trunk. (*She looks through several pockets.*) Here it is. (*She hands* MRS. SPARROW *a sandwich.*)

MRS. SPARROW: Oh! (*She breaks it in two and gives up to* MR. SPARROW.) It looks *so* good.

MR. SPARROW (*Eating*): It *is* good. But tell us why you are lonely, little Fir Tree.

FIR TREE: Because my mother left me last winter. I want to go away from this forest on a trip, too. You see the Oak Tree and the Weeping Willow don't like me.

MRS. SPARROW: Shame on them! They're selfish!

MR. SPARROW: But your brothers and sisters are way up the hill there. (*Points*)

FIR TREE (*Nodding*): Yes, but my voice is just a whisper, and so is theirs. So I can't talk to them.

MR. SPARROW: *We* like you, Fir Tree.

FIR TREE: But in the winter I have so little company. Most of the animals are gone.

MRS. SPARROW: That's true. And we must be on our way now.

FIR TREE: So soon? Well, thank you for stopping. I'll think about you, and then I won't be quite so lonely for a little while.

MRS. SPARROW: And we'll remember you. You gave us food and shelter.

MR. SPARROW (*Starting off*): Goodbye! (*Waves his hand*)

FIR TREE: Goodbye! Goodbye! Oh, I wish I could travel like you.

MRS. SPARROW: But you're a tree—not a bird. Goodbye, my dear. I'll tell everyone I meet how wonderful you are. And I wish your wish could come true!

FIR TREE: So do I! (*She watches them go off. They run past the other trees as if afraid. The other trees have watched too but as soon as they notice the* FIR TREE *looking their way they turn their backs on her.*)

OAK TREE: What a pity our beautiful forest should have such common people in it.

WEEPING WILLOW: But I like—

OAK TREE (*Interrupting*): You know you don't know what you like! Goodness gracious! Why can't we be alone for *one* day? Here comes that white rabbit. (WHITEY *hops in. Then stops by the* OAK *and* WILLOW)

WHITEY: Ah! Perhaps you can tell me where to find some food, Mr. Oak Tree.

OAK TREE (*Rudely*): And perhaps I can't!

WHITEY: But you don't understand. The snow has covered all my gardens and I must have food. I have a family of twelve rabbits at home.

OAK TREE: Twelve rabbits! How disgraceful! Well, I can't help you.

WEEPING WILLOW: Perhaps there's—

OAK TREE (*Positively*): No, there isn't. I don't like rabbits. Besides, this is our forest! Go on! Go on! Hop away with you!

WHITEY (*Wailing*): Think of my poor hungry rabbitkins!

OAK TREE: *You* think of them. They're not mine!

WEEPING WILLOW: But twelve rabbits!

OAK TREE: Be still. Let her try that silly Fir Tree.

WHITEY (*Hopping toward her*): Dear me! Whatever shall I do? (*She stops to scratch her ear.*)

FIR TREE (*Whispering gentle*): Come here, my dear Whitey!

WHITEY: Oh! Why, thanks, little Fir. I didn't see you.

FIR TREE: No, I suppose not. I'm not very big. And I'm not very important. But if you come nearer I'll show you some green food.

WHITEY (*Hopping closer*): Oh where? I'll be so happy to get some food for my little ones.

FIR TREE (*Moves her foot until she kicks away the white cloth and uncovers some greens*): See! Here it is! Under the snow blanket. I kept it fresh and green for you.

WHITEY (*Digging at the greens*): You're the best friend I ever had. A friend in need, you know.

FIR TREE: Take all you want, Whitey. Your little ones mustn't go hungry.

WHITEY: I'll tell them you saved their lives. (*Gathers up a load of greens*) You don't mind if I hurry back to them, do you?

FIR TREE (*Sadly*): I guess not. But I'll be lonelier than ever without you! How I wish I could go, too.

WHITEY (*Stopping to look at her*): So do I, little Fir Tree. But I'm afraid there'd be no room in *my* hole for even a *little* Fir Tree.

FIR TREE: My mother went away somewhere last winter.

WHITEY: Then I hope you can go, too, if that's what you want to do. But I'd miss you.

FIR TREE: Thank you.

WHITEY: Thank *you!* And I'll tell everyone I meet, what a wonderful Fir Tree you are. (*She starts off and runs past the trees who sway toward her.*)

OAK TREE (*Rudely*): Thank goodness we can be by ourselves again.

WEEPING WILLOW: There's the Fir Tree—

OAK TREE (*Impatiently*): Of course! But I'd rather forget about her.

WEEPING WILLOW: Listen! I hear a new noise, don't you? (*Sound of "Jingle Bells" is heard from offstage.*)

OAK TREE (*Covering his ears*): Noise! Noise! How I dislike children—and noise. (*"Jingle Bells" sounds closer. Then children's voices as* BOB, DICK, MARY, *and* SUE *come in singing "Jingle Bells" and jingling their bells as they come.*)

BOB: Here we are.

MARY: Out in the forest.

SUE: To get the best Christmas tree in the world

DICK: To decorate for our house.

WEEPING WILLOW (*Nudging* OAK TREE *who takes his hands away from his ears*): Listen, Oak Tree. They're looking for the best Christmas tree. Smile at them! Hurry!

OAK TREE (*Smiling a grinning smile*): Why hello, you darling little children! What can I do for you?

SUE: Perhaps you can tell us where to find the most beautiful Christmas tree in the world.

OAK TREE: Why of course I can. You want a strong tree, don't you?

BOB: Oh yes!

DICK: It would have to be strong enough to hold the decorations.

OAK TREE (*Twisting coyly from side to side*): How about me? I'm *very* strong!

MARY: Oh no! You would never do.

OAK TREE: But I'm strong.

SUE (*Shaking her head*): You're much too big—and bare.

OAK TREE (*Haughtily*): I'll have you know I'm the monarch of the forest.

WEEPING WILLOW: Wouldn't I do? I'm not so big. I'd look very pretty when I was decorated.

SUE (*Going over to look at her carefully*): You'd be better, but—

MARY: I'm sure we can do better—much better—

OAK TREE (*Sulkily*): I'm sure you can't. There are no other trees here.

BOB: But you aren't the Fir Tree, are you?

OAK TREE (*Angrily*): Certainly not! The very idea!

DICK: Well, the Sparrows told about a wonderful Fir Tree.

SUE: So did Whitey. She said it was the kindest and most beautiful tree in the forest. (*She starts farther on.*)

OAK TREE: Humph! No accounting for tastes. I suppose. (*The children all go over to the* FIR TREE.)

SUE: Why, here's a tree.

MARY: A bee-oo-ti-ful tree.

BOB: It must be the Fir Tree.

DICK: It's just what we want. Are you the Fir Tree?

FIR TREE (*Shyly*): Yes, I'm the Fir Tree.

SUE: Did you give the Sparrows and Whitey some food today?

FIR TREE: Certainly. And then I was lonesome until you came. Please don't leave me!

CHORUS: We won't! You're going with us!

MARY: I'm going to put some tinsel in her hair. (*She hangs a strand.*)

FIR TREE: But where are you going to take me?

SUE: Home with us! You'll be our own lovely Christmas tree! We'll put bright shiny lights on you.

BOB: And bells and ornaments.

DICK: And pop-corn strings! And stars!

Fir Tree: You mean I'm going on a trip? Away from the forest?

Mary: Of course! Mother told us to get a fir tree with her tip pointing to heaven and her feet in the snow.

Sue: You're *so* beautiful! (*To others*) Come on and let's dance and sing around her! (*They join hands and dance and sing "Jingle Bells," shaking the bells as they dance. The* SPARROWS *and* WHITEY *enter and stand and clap their hands to the music.* OAK TREE *and* WEEPING WILLOW *watch a moment then* OAK TREE *reaches over for* WILLOW'S *scarf. They both cry into it and they shake with sobs as the curtain closes.*)

THE END

Friendly As Can Be

by Karin Asbrand

Characters

PAL, *a dog*
JACKIE
PETER
TEDDY
DON
MARCIA
MARY
LUCY
POLLY

SETTING: *A street.*

AT RISE: *All the children are on the stage, except* JACKIE *and* PAL. *He drags* PAL *in right. Has paper bag under his arm.*

MARY: Oh, what a nice dog!

LUCY: Is he yours, Jackie? I didn't know you had a dog.

TEDDY: I didn't, either.

JACKIE: Well, I have now.

POLLY: What are you going to do with him?

JACKIE (*Pulls rope and dog drags back, whining*): I'm going to have some fun with him.

MARCIA: Don't pull the rope so tightly. You're hurting him.

DON: May we play with him, too, Jack?

JACKIE: Sure. We can all have some fun with him. (DOG *is restless and he gives him a whack.*) Keep quiet, you!

MARY: Don't hit him like that, Jackie.

LUCY: You're scaring him. Can't you see how scared he is?

JACKIE (*Indifferently*): So what? He's only a stray pup.

MARCIA: But he's a dog. He has feelings.

JACKIE: Aw, don't be such a chicken, Marcia.

DON (*Disappointed*): If you don't own him, you'll have to try to find out who does.

JACKIE: Nobody owns him. He has no license tag and no name on his collar.

DON: Maybe he lost the tag.

JACKIE: Well, that's not my fault.

MARY: It's not his fault, either.

JACKIE (*Hands rope to* DON): Here, hold him a minute, will yuh? (*Takes tin cans tied together with string, from bag.*)

PETER: He's a nice dog. I wish he were mine.

POLLY: If he had a bath he would be very pretty.

DON: I'd like a dog, too, but my mother doesn't like them, so I guess I'd better not have any. (*The* DOG *goes closer to* DON.) He likes me, I think.

JACKIE (*Who has unraveled string*): Now we'll have some fun.

MARCIA: What are you going to do?

JACKIE: I'm going to tie this mess of cans to his tail, and then we'll throw stones at him to make him run.

PETER (*Horrified*): You wouldn't do that! You couldn't!

JACKIE: Couldn't I? You'll see.

MARY: Why, you wicked, horrid boy. That's cruelty to dumb animals.

JACKIE (*With indifference*): It's fun.

DON: I don't like your idea of fun.

TEDDY: Neither do I, and I'll have nothing to do with it.

LUCY (*Half-crying*): That'll make him so scared he'll probably throw a fit, and then the policeman will shoot him.

JACKIE (*Scornfully*): You kids sure are sissies. (*Whistles to* DOG) Here! Come here, feller. (DOG *draws back toward* DON.)

DON (*Hangs onto rope*): He's smart. He knows what you are going to do, and he doesn't like you.

MARCIA: Don't let Jackie have him, Don.

TEDDY: You're not going to tie anything on him while we're here.

PETER (*Snaps his fingers*): I have an idea! Here, Jack, give me those cans. (*Without waiting for a say-so, he grabs them from* JACKIE.) Let's tie them on Jack instead, and throw stones at him.

DON: I think you've got something there. Here, Mary, you hold Pal. (*Hands rope to* MARY.)

MARY (*Takes* DOG): Pal. That's a nice name.

PETER: I think Jack needs to see what it feels like to be abused, and not be able to fight back. (*The* BOYS *all grab hold of* JACKIE, *who has tried to run away.*)

TEDDY (*Pinioning his arms*): There! I'll hold him. You boys tie the cans on him.

PETER: Tie them on good and hard so they can't come off. They'll make plenty of noise down the street when he runs. (JACKIE *howls.*)

DON: And we'll throw plenty of stones at him to make him run faster.

JACKIE (*Scared*): No, no! Let me go. Please let me go! I won't hurt him.

LUCY: You bet you won't hurt him.

MARY: We won't let you.

JACKIE: If you'll only let me go I promise I won't hurt another dog as long as I live.

MARCIA: Another dog? You'll have to promise never to hurt another animal—dog, cat, horse, puppy, goldfish, or anything as long as you live.

POLLY: Raise your right hand. (JACK *gulps and raises his right arm.*) Gee, I wish we had a Bible here for you to promise on. It would make it sort of more legal.

POLLY: I've got a school book, history. It's almost as good. (*She takes book from school bag.*) There, Jack. Put your hand on it and promise.

JACKIE: O. K. (*Lays hand on book*) I promise never to hurt another animal as long as I live.

LUCY (*Thoughtfully*): That's better. This dog would be a good friend of yours, if you would only let him.

MARY: I bet he knows some tricks, and if he doesn't, he could learn. (*Turns to* DOG *and extends her right hand*) Shake! (DOG *puts his right paw in her hand as he sits on his haunches. Gleefully*) See? What did I tell you?

DON: He's smart. (*Wistfully*) I wish I could take him home.

JACKIE (*Surprised*): Well, gee! He is smart, isn't he?

PETER (*Eagerly*): I could take him home. I haven't a dog now.

JACKIE: I found him. I'll take him home and feed him. My mother likes dogs.

PETER: Well, if she doesn't, and you don't take good care of him! We'll be watching you.

TEDDY: I certainly would like him.

POLLY: Me, too.

LUCY: And me, too.

MARCIA: I would, too, only I already have a dog and a pet kitten.

JACKIE (*Pats* DOG): I'm sorry I was mean to you, Pal. I just didn't know much about dogs, that's all. Maybe you can teach me.

PETER: He will, don't you worry.

THE END

The Blue Toadstool

by Melanie Bellah

Characters

TUNE TWIST TINY TRUMPET TWINKLE TINSEL	*6 toadstools*

TIME: *Evening.*
SETTING: *A grassy patch.*
AT RISE: TUNE, TWIST, TINY, TRUMPET, *and* TWINKLE *are sitting in little mounds, asleep.* TRUMPET *is over to one side, but the others form a little group. As they make their first speeches, they slowly unfold and get up.*

TUNE: No children's footsteps now will pass
To shake the dew drops in the grass,
The sleep falls soft in children's eyes,
And crickets call—"It's time to rise!"
TWIST: Oh, my, the Evening Star is bright,
It's bound to be a lovely night!
TWINKLE: All day I've waited for the chance
To try our new step when we dance.
TINY: Oh yes, we'll do all sorts of tricks,
Now that we'll have not five, but *six.*

TUNE: Another toadstool is at hand?
Oh, six of us—that will be grand!
But where is he? No one's in sight
But Trumpet, who sleeps half the night.
TINY: I hear he's way across the walk,
Behind the gladiola stalk.
TWINKLE (*Doing a little twirl*):
Do you suppose he'll like to dance?
Wish we could find out in advance.
TINY: A beetle who was passing by
Told me that he is rather shy.
TWIST (*Eagerly*):
That's all he said? He didn't say
This one is strange in any way?
TINY: Why no, he mentioned what he'd seen—
TUNE: He's strange, Twist? Why, what do you mean?
Your secrets put me out of humor.
TWIST: You'll soon find out; I heard a rumor.
TUNE: What is it? Won't you please report?
TWIST: Just that he is a different sort.
TWINKLE: But what is different? Please don't balk.
TWIST: They're not like us across the walk.
I'm only telling what I've heard
And you are free to doubt my word,
But anyway I think it's true,
This toadstool is not white, but blue!
TUNE (*Pacing*): Blue! You were right, that does sound strange
We all are white; it's such a change.
TWINKLE: Perhaps he won't know how to dance.
Do you think we should take the chance?
TUNE: Without him we are all the same;
Let's not let him join in our game.
TINY: Well, isn't this a nasty fix!

And I thought we were having six.
But let's ask Trumpet what he knows,
He's nearest where the new one grows.
TWIST: But that means we will have to wake him,
TWINKLE (*Jumping up and down*):
Dibs! First dibs! I get to shake him!
(*The others follow* TWINKLE *over and gather around while he wakes* TRUMPET.)
TRUMPET (*Wakening*):
Why did you interrupt my dream?
The rain was falling soft as cream,
A ladybug far from her bed
Found shelter underneath my head—
TWINKLE: Wake up, we have to have a talk
About the toadstool 'cross the walk.
TRUMPET (*Yawning*):
But what is there to talk about?
I'd like to sleep the whole night out.
(*Begins to curl up. They have to grab him and prop him up.* TWIST *brings a cup marked "Dew" and sprinkles it in his face.*)
TWIST: I know this treatment doesn't flatter,
But this is an important matter:
Tell us if you woke in the day
And saw the toadstool 'cross the way.
TRUMPET (*Getting up and looking around*): Yes, has he come? It's quite a hike.
TWIST: We'd like to know what he is like.
TRUMPET: Why, just like toadstools always are.
TINY: We'd heard he's different by far.
TUNE: We'd heard that he is something new
In toadstools—that his color's blue!
TRUMPET: What you have heard is very true.
TWINKLE: But he can't come; what shall we do?

TWIST: Yes, how will we keep him away?
TRUMPET: Now that's a pretty thing to say!
Why shouldn't he be here tonight?
TUNE: Because the five of us are white.
TRUMPET: Listen, we'd better talk this over.
TWINKLE: All right, let's form a four-leaf clover.
(TRUMPET *sits in the center, the four others around him.*)
TRUMPET: Will someone name a pretty flower?
TWINKLE: Pansies. They have a special power.
TRUMPET: That's true, they have a joyful glow.
Can you tell, Twinkle, why it's so?
TWINKLE: They seem to dance, for they're so bright!
TRUMPET: And would they if they all were white?
TWIST: But colors are their claim to fame,
While we look best when all the same.
TRUMPET: What shade of white then, is our clan?
You're almost yellow, I'm near tan.
(*All are quiet a minute.*)
TINY: And some are thin, and some are fat,
TUNE: And some have on a bigger hat—
TRUMPET: And all around us nature shows
How every living thing that grows
Adds beauty in its special way.
Why, what if all the world were gray,
And all the sounds a single tone?
TWINKLE: Oh stop, you make me want to groan!
TWIST (*Putting his head on his knees*):
I'm sorry—I guess I've been blind.
TINY (*Jumping up*):
I'm glad we'll have a different kind!
TUNE (*Getting up*):
It's getting late, the moon is high—
Perhaps I'll fetch him, since he's shy.

(*The rest get up.* TUNE *starts to go out, and then comes back.*)
He's coming now, he'll soon be here.
TRUMPET: Then quick, let's plan a welcome cheer.
(*They gather in a huddle, then break up and form a line holding hands.* TINSEL *enters.*)
TINSEL: Hello there, Tinsel is my name.
Can you fit me into your game?
TWIST (*Coming forward*):
We'd love to have you join our band;
May I be one to hold your hand?
(*Takes one hand of* TINSEL'S, *who nods*)
TINY (*Coming forward*):
I was the first to hear of you,
May I stand close beside you too?
(*Takes* TINSEL'S *other hand*)
TWINKLE (*Rushing over and tugging at* TINY'S *hand*):
I have to be there, can't you see?
Then he can learn the steps from me.
TUNE (*Breaking it up, joining* TWINKLE *to* TINY, *and then taking* TWINKLE'S *hand*):
Come Twinkle, you will have your day;
Meanwhile we all will show the way.
TRUMPET (*Joining with* TWIST; *they all form a semi-circle*):
We're happy, Tinsel, that you could
Be here to share in all that's good;
And when our games and steps are shown,
Perhaps you have some of your own
To teach us, for we'd like to know
How toadstools do things where you grow.
TINSEL: Oh thank you! If you should like more
I'll show you some I have in store.
But first I want to learn to play
Your games, if you will lead the way.

ALL (*Except* TINSEL):
Our new friend Tinsel's here to stay
So all join in the dance—hooray!
(*They dance and dance off.*)

THE END

First Aid First

by Dorothy Deming

Characters

ALICE
ROGER
JUDY
ALFRED

SETTING: *The school playground.*
AT RISE: *Stage is empty.* ALICE *runs in, gets about half way across stage and falls down.*

ALICE (*Hugging her knee and rocking as if in pain*): Aou—aou—that hurt! (*Sits up, still soothing knee, but not looking at it*) Ouch, that really hurt! I guess I've cracked it—I guess I'll be lame for life—I guess—

ROGER (*Entering on the run, stops short on seeing* ALICE): Ooops! What's the matter, Al? Hurt yourself?

ALICE (*Sobbing loudly and hugging her knee*): Oh—oh—my knee!

ROGER (*Sitting down beside her*): Let's see it. Did you trip?

ALICE (*Faintly*): Yes, right down hard, bump on my knee. Is—is it bleeding?

ROGER (*Examining the knee*): No, but you have scraped off some of the skin. You'll have a big bruise—all green, yellow and blue—pretty! Try bending it. (ALICE *straightens and bends her knee.*) That hurt?

ALICE: Not too much. (*For the first time looks at knee. Starts to feel the top of it with her finger.*)

ROGER (*Hastily catching her hand*): No . . . no—don't touch the place where the skin is broken. Your hands are dirty.

ALICE (*Crossly*): So are yours. What difference does it make?

ROGER: I was careful not to touch the broken skin. Our dirty hands might give you an—

JUDY (*Bustling in*): Hi, what's this all about? I heard you talking about bleeding, bruises and broken skin—oh, Al! (*Sits down beside* ALICE) You've scraped your knee! Don't touch it, there's a lot of dirt on your hands. You'll get an infection.

ROGER: Just what I was saying.

ALICE (*Shakily*): An infection? I thought that was from rusty nails. There are no nails here. (*Looks around her.*)

ROGER: That's a special kind of infection, but the dirt on the playground and our dirty hands might carry other kinds of infection through your broken skin. Remember I had an infected thumb from a cut. That's the reason I know all about infections. (*Gets up.*)

JUDY (*Also getting up*): You ought to have that knee cleaned up and a bandage put over the scraped place. Miss Bacon will fix it for you if the school nurse isn't here.

ROGER: Have it fixed right away, too. That was the trouble with my thumb, I didn't do anything about it, left it uncovered, then three days later—ouch! I've learned my lesson.

ALICE (*Gets out a wrinkled handkerchief*): All right, I'll cover it right away. (*Starts to put handkerchief around knee.*)

JUDY (*Shocked tones*): Oh, never that horrible soiled handkerchief, Al! It's full of germs!

ALICE (*Shaking handkerchief*): Germs? Where? I don't see any. What are they anyway? (ROGER *and* JUDY *laugh.*)

ROGER: You can't see them, silly.

JUDY (*Sees* ALFRED *coming*): Here comes Alfred. Make him tell us what germs are. He's going to be a doctor like his father. Alfred, Alice has scraped her knee and we have been telling her how to keep out germs. She wants to know what germs are!

Alfred (*Strutting*): Aw—germs! Lil' ol' germs! I know all about 'em. Let's see your knee, Al. (*Stoops and looks at it briefly.*) You'd better go right in and ask Miss Bacon to wash off your knee with disinfectant and cover the scraped part to keep out germs.

Alice (*Impatiently*): Germs, germs. There you go again. What are they and where are they?

Alfred (*Gesturing widely*): Everywhere!

Judy: But you can't see them.

Alfred: Only under a microscope. They carry diseases and infections.

Alice: Like colds? Like measles?

Alfred: Yes, those are infections spread from one person to another, but when you break your skin—cut it, burn it, scrape it, even prick it, then beware of the common infections which come from the germs all about us. Nothing dirty should ever touch broken skin and even little tiny wounds should be disinfected and dressed.

Alice (*Getting slowly to her feet with* Roger's *help, and holding her dress so that it does not touch her knee*): Well, I guess I'd better go in and get this knee 'tended to. I don't want germs.

Roger: That's right, first aid *first*.

Alfred: Better still, watch your step, don't be in such a hurry. Your skin is your natural protection against infection. Keep it whole!

Judy (*Impressed*): My goodness, Alfred, you sound just like your father!

Alfred: Of course. I'm going to be a doctor.

Alice (*Walking away with only a slight limp*): I'm going to be a dancer, so I hope my knee will be all right. (*Exit.*)

Judy (*Shyly*): I've always wanted to be a nurse. May I nurse your patients, Alfred, when you are a doctor?

Alfred (*Importantly*): Sure, sure, if you are a good nurse— What are you going to be, Roger?

Roger (*Gazing dreamily up at the sky*): Oh—er, who—me? Oh, hadn't you heard? I'm going to be head of the biggest hospital in the world and hire you both to work for me! (*Children laugh and run off the stage.*)

THE END

The Littlest Month

by Damally U. Fox

Characters

FATHER TIME
THE TWELVE MONTHS

SETTING: *Upstage center is a raised dias. On either side of the dias are six chairs.*

AT RISE: FATHER TIME *is seated on the dias leaning on his scythe.* THE MONTHS *stand on either side of him.*

FATHER TIME: Be seated, ye seasons, and mark what I say. (*He nods rather sleepily as* THE MONTHS *sit down. Then he looks up impatiently at the confusion and noise.*) For a long time now I have thought the world should have more order. Man never knows when one of you will decide to overstay your time. Some of you actually bring your weather out of season. This must stop. (MONTHS *murmur among themselves.*) Silence! This must stop—or did I say that before?

APRIL: You did say it, Father Time. (*She giggles and bobs up from her chair to drop a little curtsy.*)

FATHER TIME (*In a loud voice*): Silence, April! What are you laughing about? (APRIL *stops laughing and begins to cry.*) Always April. I declare, one never knows which side of you to believe.

MAY: She always smiles for me, Father Time.

MARCH (*Blows out his cheeks and roars*): Well, I can make her cry! (*He roars and makes a huge bellowing sound.*)

FEBRUARY (*Speaks gently*): But March, you are so strong you frighten her.

FATHER TIME (*Rousing from his nodding*): Enough. Enough, I say. Listen to my plan. All the year will be divided into days and you shall each share alike.

JANUARY: But, Father Time, that cannot be. There are 365 days in a year and only twelve of us. (FATHER TIME *has fallen asleep again and* THE MONTHS *fall into a murmuring discussion while* MAY *and* JUNE *try to comfort* APRIL. JULY *and* AUGUST *stretch and yawn and fan themselves.* SEPTEMBER *looks through his books.* OCTOBER *scatters colored leaves around her and* NOVEMBER *begins gathering up corn stalks, while* DECEMBER *beats his hands together to warm himself and stamps his feet.*)

FATHER TIME (*Rousing from his sleep*): Why do you not stand still? I declare I can't slip off for a moment without all of you trying to take my place. I have a plan to divide the year.

JANUARY: But Father Time, we all can't have equal days. So, I shall take the extra five because I am the beginning of the year.

MARCH: Indeed you won't. As it is, I have to keep my winds in my bag too long. No, I shall have the extra days. I must sail the ships and fly the kites and carry the rain for April, even though she never smiles at me.

APRIL: I bring the rain, so surely I should have the extra days.

MAY: But all the orchards blooms in May and much of the planting is done by me. Surely I should have the extra days. (JULY *and* AUGUST *yawn and fan themselves.*)

JULY: Of course you all know everyone would like me to stay for the whole year—(*This is greeted by a chorus of "No, no."*)

AUGUST: Well, I think we should take only our share, but we *are* the most popular, you know. (*Both* JULY *and* AUGUST *preen themselves and then settle back languidly.*)

SEPTEMBER: Of course I should like to have more days as I find my time is all too short at the first and far too long at the end. (*Thoughtfully*) Perhaps some arrangement could be made so vacations won't stop in my month; that's given me such a bad name.

OCTOBER: Well, nobody doubts that I am the most beautiful. I could well afford to stay longer than the rest.

NOVEMBER: There is so much harvesting to be done. Can you think what better way to use those extra days than for gathering the crops?

DECEMBER: How foolish you all are. It is very plain to me that Christmas time should last the entire year. I have often heard people wish for it.

JANUARY: I still say I should have the extra days. (*A chorus of "No, no" greets this statement.*)

FEBRUARY: No, my good friends, this is no way to settle the matter. Let us all give a day and agree we cannot use Father Time this way.

JANUARY: I for one will not give up.

MARCH: Nor I.

MAY: I should love to, but I simply can't.

JUNE: May, you mean you will not.

JULY: Well, I won't withdraw.

AUGUST: Nor will I.

OCTOBER: No one would want me to, so I won't.

DECEMBER: Well, as I said before, everybody wants me to last all year, so of course I shan't give in.

FEBRUARY: Then will you take thirty days, April?

APRIL: Yes, February, if you ask it.

JUNE: I am very lucky. I have most of the weddings and roses. I can well afford to be generous.

SEPTEMBER: I represent the month of learning, so of course I can compromise, only I do wish I were not so unpopular with the children.

NOVEMBER: I have so much to be grateful for. I will take the thirty days and fill them with Thanksgiving.

FEBRUARY: Are there then no others who will give up to make the months come out even? (SEVEN MONTHS *stubbornly say "No, no."*) We cannot all lay claim to the extra five days. Let two of you give up your claims and then the others may each have an extra day. (*Again* THE MONTHS *say "No, no, no."*) Then, for the sake of peace, I shall give up two of my own days. (APRIL, JUNE, SEPTEMBER *and* NOVEMBER *say in chorus, "No, no, February, you should not do that."*) It is the only way. But I shall make the most of my twenty-eight days.

FATHER TIME (*Who has been dozing all through the argument, rouses with a start*): What! What! Twenty-eight days? Who said twenty-eight days?

FEBRUARY: I did, Father Time. The months have all agreed to take thirty or thirty-one days. It is all arranged.

FATHER TIME: I declare! How can it be? I was here all the time.

FEBRUARY: So you were, Father Time, but you slipped away again. We thought to save you and this is our plan.

JANUARY: I have thirty-one days in which to skate and ski and ride on sleighs. I make the earth hard and cold and cover it with snow.

MARCH: I have thirty-one days and I will blow and blow. (*He starts making blustery noises.*)

APRIL: I have thirty days, Father Time.

MAY: I have thirty-one days in which to strew the earth with blossoms.

JUNE: I took thirty days.

JULY (*In a drowsy voice*): I took thirty-one days.

AUGUST: Of course I had to have thirty-one days.

SEPTEMBER (*Speaking nervously and in a pedantic way*): I reached the decision, Father Time, that I would take only thirty days, in order to make peace—but I still wish you could do something to make me more popular.

OCTOBER (*Preening herself*): Naturally I have to have thirty-one.

NOVEMBER: I am very grateful for my full thirty days.

DECEMBER: You understand, Father Time, that I had to have my thirty-one days.

FATHER TIME: Had you, indeed? Then February, you have only twenty-eight days. Well, I shall see to that. Every four years you shall have an extra day. Then—(*He rubs his chin.*) there should be something else for you, February. (*He sits thoughtfully for a moment.*) Oh, yes. I have it. For your generosity, you shall be unlike the other months in many ways. Just twenty-eight days and an extra day every four years and in your month our greatest citizens will be born. (*He looks from one* MONTH *to another and says solemnly.*) Remember the saying—Blessed is the peacemaker. I shall take you into the future. February twelfth Abraham Lincoln shall be born. (*If desired, a narrator may come on stage here and take up the highlights of Lincoln's life, with actors in costume acting out a pantomime.*) And on February fourteenth—we will make that a happy day of love—Valentine's Day. (*Narrator can now read another story that is acted out in pantomime.*) And on February twenty-second there will be born a great leader of men—George Washington. (*Narrator can talk about Washington with accompanying pantomime.*) And now, you months must do your work. I wish to return to the ages. (THE MONTHS, *starting with* JANUARY, *pass before the dias. As each comes up to* FATHER TIME *they motion for the next* MONTH *to follow. By the time* DECEMBER *passes the dias,* FATHER TIME *is sound asleep.*)

THE END

The Seven Little Seeds

by Jean Gould

Characters

THE SEVEN LITTLE SEEDS	THE WIND
THE SUN	THE RAIN

SETTING: *The Little Seeds' house under the ground.*

AT RISE: *The* SEVEN LITTLE SEEDS *all in a row are sound asleep on their cots. After a moment, a gentle tapping is heard. The* LITTLE SEEDS *stir on their cots, but do not waken. The tapping becomes stronger. The* LITTLE SEEDS *yawn, stretch, and sit up, one by one.*

1ST LITTLE SEED (*Sleepily*): Ho, hum . . . I wonder why I woke up.

2ND LITTLE SEED (*Rubbing her eyes*): I haven't half had my sleep out.

OTHER LITTLE SEEDS: Nor I. (*It is very quiet; suddenly the tapping is heard again.*)

3RD LITTLE SEED (*Startled*): Oh! What was that? (*The* RAIN *enters tapping harder as he comes closer.*)

4TH LITTLE SEED (*Frightened*): Somebody's at the door!

5TH LITTLE SEED: So that's what woke us.

6TH LITTLE SEED: I'm afraid!

7TH LITTLE SEED: So am I! What shall we do?

1ST LITTLE SEED: We just won't answer. We'll lie down again and pretend we're asleep. (*They all do so.*)

RAIN (*Calling softly as he taps on door*): Little seeds, little seeds! (*They do not answer, but he goes on tapping.*)

LITTLE SEEDS: (*They are unable to sleep, and sit up again, casting wary looks toward the door.*)

1ST LITTLE SEED (*Finally, hesitantly*): Who—who's there?

RAIN: I am the rain, little seeds. I've come to call on you.

1ST LITTLE SEED (*Coldly*): I'm sorry, we are taking a nap.

2ND LITTLE SEED: Please go away.

RAIN: But I have travelled over hill and dale just to see you. Please let me come in.

3RD LITTLE SEED: We never allow visitors.

4TH LITTLE SEED: They frighten us.

5TH LITTLE SEED: We are so small and helpless.

RAIN: But I can make you grow—especially if you come to the top of the earth with me. Please let me come in! (*He taps hard again.*)

ALL LITTLE SEEDS (*Alarmed*): No, no, no!

6TH LITTLE SEED: We just want to stay right here in our snug little house.

7TH LITTLE SEED: We don't want anyone to come in, and we don't want to go out.

1ST LITTLE SEED: Now please go away and let us finish our naps.

RAIN (*Sadly*): Very well, I'll leave; but I shall be back some day. Goodbye, little seeds.

ALL LITTLE SEEDS: Goodbye, Rain. (*The* RAIN *goes. The* LITTLE SEEDS *get ready to go back to bed.*) Thank goodness he's gone! (*They stand in a row and sing.*)

We like to sleep, in our lower berth,
Down here, away down deep in the earth.
We'd rather stay all safe and sound,
Than dance and play above the ground.

(*They climb on their cots and fall asleep. After a moment, the* WIND *comes in from the left, gives three puffs on the door.*)

WIND: Oo—whoo—oo! (*The* LITTLE SEEDS *stir on their cots, but do not waken. The* WIND *puffs harder.*) Ooo—whoo—ooo! Little seeds, little seeds!

1st Little Seed (*Sitting up suddenly*): Oh! What was that?

Wind: Oo—whoo—oo! Little seeds!

2nd Little Seed: Somebody else at the door!

3rd Little Seed: Won't they ever let us sleep?

Wind (*Giving three more hard puffs*): Ooo—whooo—ooo!

4th Little Seed (*Frightened*): Oh, my!

1st Little Seed (*Trying to be brave*): Who—who's there?

Wind: I am the wind, little seeds. I just blew into town today and have come to call on you.

1st Little Seed: I am sorry, we are taking a nap. Please go away.

Wind: But I have travelled over hill and dale to see you. Please let me come in.

5th Little Seed: We never allow visitors; they frighten us.

6th Little Seed: We are so small and helpless.

Wind: But I can make you grow—especially if you come to the top of the earth with me. I want to show you how beautiful it is here, too. Please, please let me come in! (*He puffs very hard.*) Ooo—whoo—who—ooo!

All Little Seeds (*Alarmed*): No, no, no!

6th Little Seed: We want to stay right here in our snug little house.

7th Little Seed: We don't want anyone to come in, and we don't want to go out.

1st Little Seed: Now be so good as to go away and let us finish our naps.

Wind (*With a gentle sigh*): Very well, I'll leave. But I shall be back some day. Goodbye, little seeds. (*He goes out.*)

All Little Seeds: Goodbye, Wind. (*They slide down and pull up the covers again.*) Thank goodness he's gone! (*They fall asleep. After a moment, the* Sun *comes ambling in from the left, smiling. He carries a golden ray-stick in his hand, which he holds near the keyhole of the door.*)

Sun (*Calling brightly*): Little seeds, little seeds! (*The* Little Seeds *stir on their cots, but do not awaken. The* Sun *puts his ray-*

stick against the keyhole again, and the LITTLE SEEDS, *growing warm, throw off the covers, but still do not awaken.*)

SUN: (*Calling brightly and loudly*): Little seeds, little seeds!

1ST LITTLE SEED (*Sitting up with a start*): I wonder why I feel so warm.

SUN: Little seeds!

2ND LITTLE SEED: Oh! Still another at our door.

3RD LITTLE SEED: I should think they'd know by now we don't wish to be disturbed.

SUN (*In a loud, jolly voice*): Open up, little seeds!

4TH LITTLE SEED: Well! how do you like that?

1ST LITTLE SEED (*Slightly braver than before*): Who—who's there?

SUN: I am the sun, little seeds. I have come to call on you.

1ST LITTLE SEED: I'm sorry, we are taking a nap. Please go away.

SUN: But I have shone my face all over the countryside looking for you. Please let me come in.

1ST LITTLE SEED: We told the rain, and we told the wind, and now we will tell you that we never allow visitors.

5TH LITTLE SEED: They frighten us.

6TH LITTLE SEED: We are so small and helpless.

SUN: But I can make you grow with my warm ray—especially if you come to the top of the earth with me; it is so beautiful up here. I want to show you the sights. But first please let me come in! (*He holds the ray-stick tight against the door, and the* LITTLE SEEDS *start to fan themselves from the heat.*)

ALL LITTLE SEEDS: No, no, no!

1ST LITTLE SEED: The others said the same thing, but we wouldn't let them come in, and we won't let you.

6TH LITTLE SEED: We want to stay right here by ourselves in our snug little house.

7TH LITTLE SEED: We don't want anyone to come in, and we don't want to go out.

1ST LITTLE SEED: Now I beg you to go away and let us finish our naps.

SUN (*Dully, letting his ray-stick hang limply at his side*): Very well, I'll leave. But I shall be back some day. Goodbye, little seeds.

ALL LITTLE SEEDS: Goodbye, Sun. (*They slide down and pull up the covers again.*) Thank goodness he's gone!

1ST LITTLE SEED: Maybe we can finally finish our naps. (*They fall asleep. After a moment, the* SUN, *the* WIND *and the* RAIN *come in together, left, and stop a short distance from the door.*)

RAIN: I tried three times. They wouldn't let me come in.

WIND: And I tried three times. They wouldn't let me come in, either.

SUN: Nor me. I tried three times more.

RAIN: I am so worried about the little seeds. If they don't let us in, if they keep on sleeping this way, they will never grow up and blossom. They will dry up and fall to pieces.

WIND (*Sighing*): Yes, it is sad. But we have each tried our best. What else can we do?

SUN (*Frowning fiercely*): I have been thinking. Everybody knows that the rain alone can't make the flowers grow, and the wind can't, nor the sun. It takes all three of us to do the trick. Now, perhaps, if we go together . . . I have a plan. (*He draws* WIND *and* RAIN *closer and whispers in their ears.*)

RAIN: Maybe we should try it. We must save the little seeds!

WIND: Yes, yes, let's do it!

SUN: On to the door! (*They come up to the door. The* RAIN *raps loudly, the* WIND *puffs loud and long, and the* SUN *shines his ray-stick through the keyhole while calling loudly.*) Little seeds! Little seeds!

WIND: Whooo—ooo—whooo—ooo!

RAIN: Little Seeds!

1ST LITTLE SEED (*Waking up with a jump*): What a terrible racket! (*Other* LITTLE SEEDS, *waking, covering their ears with their hands, ad-lib exclamations like, "Oh!" "What's going on?" etc.* 1ST LITTLE SEED *tries very hard to be brave.*) Who—who—who's there?

SUN: This is the sun, and the wind, and the rain. For the last time, will you please let us come in?

1ST LITTLE SEED: No, no! We have told you so many times . . .

RAIN: But we only want to help you. If you sleep any longer, you will dry up and go to pieces. We want you to live and grow on the earth to become flowers.

SUN (*Calling jovially*): Open up, little seeds!

ALL LITTLE SEEDS: No, no, no!

2ND LITTLE SEED: We're too frightened.

3RD LITTLE SEED: Go away!

SUN (*Sternly*): Little seeds, Mother Earth has told us to bring you up. And you know you must obey your mother. (*The* LITTLE SEEDS *look at each other, and then nod their heads.*)

1ST LITTLE SEED (*Fearfully*): Very well—c-come in. (*The* SUN *opens the door, followed by the* WIND *and the* RAIN. *The* LITTLE SEEDS, *too frightened to look, close their eyes tight.*)

RAIN: Do not be afraid, dear little seeds. We mean you no harm.

SUN (*Lining them all up*): Now, follow us!

1ST LITTLE SEED (*Still with closed eyes*): No, no, please don't make us leave our snug little house!

SUN: You'll have a much prettier, larger one. (*They lead the* LITTLE SEEDS *out of the door, taking steps as if they were climbing to the top of the earth. Then they place the* LITTLE SEEDS *in a row.*) Please stop shivering, little seeds. I will keep you warm.

RAIN: And when you grow too hot from the sun's rays, I will cool you off.

WIND: I, too; I will fan you with my finest breezes.

SUN: Open your eyes, little seeds. Look around you. (*After a moment, the* LITTLE SEEDS *slowly open their eyes, and look all around them. Very slowly, they begin to smile.*)

1ST LITTLE SEED (*Softly, wonderingly*): My! What a *beautiful* earth!

SUN (*Smiling too*): You wouldn't want to go back now, would you?

ALL LITTLE SEEDS: Oh, no! (*They rip off their brown paper pods* *to disclose brightly colored flower costumes underneath. Together they sing)*

We liked to sleep, in our lower berth,
Down there, away down deep in the earth;
But now we're here, all safe and sound,
We'd rather stay above the ground.

THE END

Biskie the Snowman

by John F. Lehman

Characters

Dusty
Jerry } *good friends*
Biskie, *a snowman*
George
Sally
Ginger
Carla } *children and friends of* Dusty *and* Jerry *and the snowman*
Billy
Peter

Setting: *An open field.*

At Rise: Biskie *is alone in the center of the stage. Voices are heard from the left . . .*

Dusty: I'm just about walked out, Jerry! Let's sit down and catch our breath!

Jerry: We must be almost at the top of the hill. (*They enter from left dragging a red sled.*) It's getting late.

Dusty: Hey look, Jerry! Looky!

Jerry: Huh? What is it?

Dusty: Here's our snowman! I thought we lost him!

Jerry (*Surprised*): Well . . . so it is. We looked all over for you, Mr. Snowman!

Dusty: We surely did!

Snowman: Did you? I'm glad!

DUSTY (*Looking at* JERRY): Say! Did you hear someone talking, Jerry?

JERRY (*Pointing to* SNOWMAN): I—I think IT talked, Dusty!

DUSTY: Do you really think so? (*Knocks on his chest with fist as if on a door. The sound of "knocking on a door" responds, backstage*) Mr. Snowman! Please talk to us some more.

SNOWMAN: I said, I'm glad you found me!

JERRY (*Awed*): Gee whiz!

DUSTY (*Also awed*): Gee whizzer! It talks! But—but why are you glad we found you?

SNOWMAN: It's mighty lonesome and cold out here on this hill.

DUSTY: I never thought snowmen would ever get lonesome.

JERRY (*Looking at colorful mittens*): Let's give the snowman my red mittens. They will keep his hands warmer.

DUSTY: What about your hands, Jerry?

JERRY: Aw, Dusty, mittens always get in the way when I make snowballs!

DUSTY: Go ahead then. Put them on him.

JERRY: Sure. (*He removes mittens and slides them on* SNOWMAN'S *arms.*) There you are, old boy, how's that?

DUSTY: Do you know what I'm gonna do?

JERRY: What, Dusty?

DUSTY: Give him my cap! (*He slides it off his head.*)

JERRY: Here, I'll help you. (*So the boys put the red wool cap on the* SNOWMAN.) Say he's shaping up. Getting more human all the time.

SNOWMAN: Thanks. I even feel better.

DUSTY: Mr. Snowman! I'd like to ask you something?

SNOWMAN: I know what you're going to say . . .

DUSTY: You do? Did you hear that, Jerry? (JERRY *just nods.*)

SNOWMAN: You don't think I have a name. But I do. It's Biskie. An odd name—but a name nevertheless.

DUSTY: Sure enough! He said his name is Biskie, Jerry.

JERRY: You're wonderful, Biskie!

SNOWMAN: Thank you. Oh oh—here come your classmates up the hill. They've been out on the hillside making a snowman, too. Even though I only live a few days—it's great to come back every year to see the children. (*Children come from left.*) And they dress us up.

GEORGE: So here you are! We thought you got rolled up in a snowman. We couldn't find you.

DUSTY: Did you ever hear a snowman talk?

GEORGE: Don't be like that, Dusty!

DUSTY (*Pointing*): This one does. (*To* JERRY) How about it, Jerry?

JERRY: He sure does! His name is Biskie! He told us.

SALLY: How come?

JERRY: We don't know ourselves, Sally. He talks and that's all there is to it.

GINGER: That ought to be oodles of fun, don't you think so, Carla?

CARLA: Yes, I do.

SNOWMAN: Why don't you children play a game? (*They are completely surprised.*)

ALL: A game?

CARLA (*Enthusiastic*): Oh, he does talk! Sally, did you hear?

SALLY: This is so wonderful! Wait until I tell Mother.

DUSTY: Come on, he said let's play a game!

GINGER: What sort of game shall we play, Biskie?

SNOWMAN: How about "Ring around the Snowman"?

BILLY: That's new to me.

PETER: Me too!

ALL: Me too!

SNOWMAN: Now form a ring—join hands and surround me.

ALL: Sure. Sure, etc., etc.

SNOWMAN: Now follow directions. Ready?

GEORGE: We're ready, Biskie. Shoot!

SNOWMAN:

Ring around the snowman

Hippety hop, hop, hop—
Lots of children laughing
Don't you stop, stop, stop—
Reverse and turn then clap, clap, clap!
Last one down is it! (*They all squat down as instructed.*)

GINGER (*Laughing*): Sally—you're the last one!

SALLY: I guess I'm too slow. Let's try it again! It's fun.

SNOWMAN: You're not finished yet.

ALL: We're not?

SALLY: Goody!

SNOWMAN: No, no, no. Reach into my pocket, Sally! (*She hesitates.*) Don't be afraid—go ahead.

SALLY: I—I didn't know snowmen had pockets—

SNOWMAN: Well, I haven't exactly. Its sort of a cold storage pit, you might say.

SALLY (*Reaching down and pulling out white candy in a sack*): Why look—what is this?

SNOWMAN: Don't you know? You should!

ALL: What is it, Biskie?

SNOWMAN: You try one and see. (SALLY *passes out the candy.* GINGER *is first to receive one—she tries her candy right away.*)

GINGER (*Excited*): Snow candy!

ALL: That's what it is!

DUSTY: See, I told you Biskie is wonderful! (*To* SNOWMAN) Thank you.

SNOWMAN: I'm sure you are all quite welcome to the snow candy. I enjoy seeing you all so happy. If only the world could listen to children laugh and watch them having fun, why nations couldn't be angry with one another. Impossible! You're magic! That's why I look forward to coming back during the winter of each year.

GINGER: Oh, Mr. Snowman! It's getting late. Oh, we'll have to go home, I'm afraid.

Snowman: I know. Time for your warm suppers. Besides it's getting colder.

Dusty: Let's go. My mother will be furious.

Jerry: O.K. (*They start to leave, left stage.*) Well, we hate to go! (Ginger *returns and places her scarf around his neck.*)

Ginger: This might keep you warmer tonight, Mr. Biskie . . . besides it might keep you with us longer. (*She ties it.*)

Snowman: Thank you, Ginger. (*She leaves.*) Jerry? (*He is getting his red sled from upstage.*)

Jerry: Yes?

Snowman: Will you please come back tomorrow night? If I'm still here?

Jerry: Yes, we'll all be back. You can depend on us. Good night. Say—and don't you go melt away.

Snowman: Jerry?

Jerry: Yes, Biskie?

Snowman: Reach in my other pocket. (Jerry *does so, pulls out another sack of candy. He places it on his sled.*)

Snowman: For all of you to eat on your way home.

Jerry: Thanks, Biskie. Good night . . .

Snowman: Good night—

Jerry (*Calling to others*): Hey, Biskie has given us some more candy.

Snowman:

There is no joy like their joy,
There is no song so free.
A snowman lives once each year
To bring all children cheer.

Life is short—hold back the sun!
Snowflakes fall from above.
Screen the earth in Winter's sleep,
Snowmen grow when it's deep.

Winds grow bold, with greying skies,
The children brave the chill,
To dress the snowman's family,
Red cap, green mitts, and frills.

There is no joy like their joy,
There is no song so gay,
A snowman lives once each year . . .
Why can't we remain to play?
(*A slow curtain*)

THE END

Good Health Trolley

by John F. Lehman

Characters

TEN PASSENGERS
CONDUCTOR
MOTORMAN

SETTING: *The inside of a trolley car.*
BEFORE RISE: *A young fellow comes out in front.*

CONDUCTOR:
How's your health?
Feeling fine?
How's your rest?
Teeth all shine?
How's your diet?
On the beam?
How's your spinach?
Eyes both gleam?
Feeling jolly?
Ohhh, you're not?
Well . . .
Climb aboard
Good Health Trolley!

(*Curtain rises*)

AT RISE: CONDUCTOR *moves upstage into scene. Pulls cord, it responds, "Tink" "Tink." The* MOTORMAN *gives the handle a twist.* CONDUCTOR *moves to right of car and stands.*)

1ST PASSENGER (*Rises. Displays toothbrush and tube of paste*):
Scrub your teeth
Twice each day.
See your dentist,
Don't delay! (*Sits down*)

2ND PASSENGER (*Rises. Showing a clean glass*):
Fill this up
To the brim.
Drink much water
And keep in trim. (*Sits down*)

3RD PASSENGER (*Rising*):
Once each day
Fill the tub.
Dive down deep,
Like a sub.
Don't be tight,
With the soap.
Keep your head
Well afloat!
(*Pantomime could be worked in this one. Takes place in seat.*)

4TH PASSENGER (*Rises. Displays assorted candy bars*):
No, no . . .
Not one each day.
Lunch should be
The healthy way.

No, no . . .
'Twill put to shame
The final score
In baseball games.

5TH PASSENGER (*Rises*):
Shoes all shine
So neat and clean.

Hair all combed
Right on the beam! (*Sits down*)

6TH PASSENGER (*Rising with milk bottle*):
Here it is,
And it's real!
Serve a glass
With every meal.
Health galore . . .
Health we seek.
Look at me . . .
Rosy cheeks!
(*Rubs his own cheeks and sits down*)

CONDUCTOR (*Moves in from the right*):
Sorry folks,
Tickets please!
(*They find them.*)
Good Health Trolley
Must have these!
(*Tickets are milk tops from bottles. He punches and returns.*)

ALL:
That's all right,
That's only fair.
Tickets for health
We like to share.
(CONDUCTOR *returns to right.*)

7TH PASSENGER (*Rising. Holding up roller skates*):
Skate you must
If fun you seek.
Exercise!
You can't be weak! (*Sitting on bench*)

8TH PASSENGER (*Rises, taking a deep breath or two*):
Fresh, clean air
So it's sung.

Destroys bugs
In your lungs! (*Bangs on chest to prove it. Sits down.*)

9TH PASSENGER (*Rising with a luscious red apple*):
Apple a day
Keeps doc away.
Vitamin B
Vitamin C.
Glance at me . . .
Golly (*Flexing arm muscle.*) Gosh! (*He sits down.*)

10TH PASSENGER:
All American
Passengers . . . we.
Health is first!
Don't you agree?
How about you?
Well, that's fine!

CONDUCTOR:
Here it is . . .
END OF LINE!
(*Pulls cord . . . "Tink" "Wink." Passengers rise in a group to file out at right.*)

THE END

Doctor Manners

by Mildred Hark and Noel McQueen

Characters

Dr. Manners
Nurse, *Miss Polite*
Tommy
Mazie
Jane
Sue
Billy

Setting: *The office of Dr. Manners.*

At Rise: Nurse, *Miss Polite, is straightening things on desk. The phone rings and she answers it.*

Nurse: Hello, Dr. Manners' office—
He treats children every day;
If they are impolite and rude,
He finds why they act that way.
Just send your little boy or girl
To see him for a test,
And he will try to find a cure—
At least, he'll do his best.
(*She hangs up.* Dr. Manners *enters right.*)

Dr. Manners: Good morning, Miss Polite. How are things today?

Nurse: Good morning, Dr. Manners. I'm afraid the children are growing worse. Several mothers and teachers have called already this morning.

Dr. Manners: Dear me. What seem to be the symptoms?

Nurse: Impoliteness, rudeness, grabbing things away from other people—some of them sound almost incurable.

DR. MANNERS: My, my, there must be an epidemic. Bad manners are contagious.

NURSE: Yes, they are. One child gets into a bad habit and the others seem to catch it.

DR. MANNERS: Well, it's up to me. I'll have to see what I can do. (TOMMY *enters right and slams the door after him. He stands looking belligerent.*) Well, here's our first case. Slam-bangitis, it would seem to be. Good morning, son.

TOMMY (*Shouting*): Are you old Doc Manners?

DR. MANNERS: Yes, but you needn't shout. What's your name and what seems to be your trouble?

TOMMY (*Stepping toward* DOCTOR):

I'm Tommy and my mother says
I'm rude and impolite;
She says she thinks that maybe you
Could help to set me right.

DR. MANNERS: Hmmm, quite possibly, quite possibly. Miss Polite, will you help him onto the table while I fetch the instruments? (*He goes to shelves upstage.*)

NURSE: Let me help you onto the table, Tommy.

TOMMY: I don't need any help. (*And he flops onto table.*)

NURSE: I was just trying to be polite.

DR. MANNERS (*Returning to table with a yardstick and magnifying glass*): Now, let's see. Open your mouth, young man and say, Ah. (*As* TOMMY *opens his mouth the* DOCTOR *peers in through the magnifying glass.*)

TOMMY (*Shouting*): Ahhhh!

DR. MANNERS (*Thoughtfully*): Ah, a little rough.

NURSE: And too loud.

DR. MANNERS: Well, that's what impoliteness does to the throat. I think if we paint it with some of that soothing balm . . .

NURSE: I'll get it, Doctor. (NURSE *goes to shelves and returns with a bottle and a small brush which she hands to* DOCTOR.)

DR. MANNERS: Yes—yes, it's all part of the door-slamming symptom. He's inclined to overdo. Now, just keep your mouth open—this won't hurt, Tommy. (*He dips brush into bottle and dabs it in* TOMMY'S *mouth.*) How's that?

TOMMY: Not bad.

DR. MANNERS: Good. Now let's see your right arm. (DOCTOR *holds* TOMMY'S *arm out straight and measures it with the yardstick.*) A fine arm—a fine arm. (*He flexes it and feels the muscle.*)

TOMMY: How do you like that muscle, Doc?

DR. MANNERS: Fine, Tommy, but it's a shame to waste such good muscle on slamming doors. Some day you may need it to play baseball.

TOMMY: Say, maybe you've got something there.

DR. MANNERS: Good. I believe you will react favorably to a dose of Calm-down pills. (*He goes to shelf and takes bottle from which he feeds* TOMMY *a pill.*) Now you'd better sit quietly for a while. (*He nods to chairs against right wall and* TOMMY *goes and sits down.* NURSE *puts yardstick, glass, brush and bottle back on shelves, and* DOCTOR *starts for desk.* MAZIE *and* JANE *rush in right.* MAZIE *has hold of* JANE'S *hair.*)

JANE (*Pulling herself free*): You let me alone. I can have my hair the way I want it. (JANE *wears sweater buttoned up wrong and one stocking up and one down.*)

MAZIE (*Rushing to shelves upstage and picking up various things*): Oh my, look at all this stuff. What's this—what's this?

NURSE (*To* MAZIE): You mustn't touch those things. They belong to Dr. Manners. (*She takes* MAZIE *by arm and leads her right.*) You may sit in one of these chairs until the Doctor is ready for you.

MAZIE: Why, look at Tommy. He must be sick, sitting so still and quiet.

TOMMY: No, I'm not sick. I feel better all the time.

DR. MANNERS: Fine—fine, the medicine is taking effect. Now, young ladies, let's see what we can do for you. You first. (*He goes to* JANE.)

JANE: My name is Jane, and Teacher says
I need to learn to dress
And wash my face and comb my hair
So I won't look a mess.

DR. MANNERS: Hmmmm, I see—I see.

NURSE: It's a shame. She could be such a pretty girl.

JANE: I don't want to be pretty. I like being the way I am.

DR. MANNERS: But my dear, being untidy is very bad manners. Other people have to look at you, you know. Now, sit up on the table and we'll see what we can do. (NURSE *helps* JANE *to sit on edge of table. She faces audience.* DOCTOR *goes to desk and turns few pages in the book, reads a moment.*) Hmmm. Yes—yes, I think this is it.

NURSE (*Hopefully*): You think you have a cure, Doctor?

DR. MANNERS: I hope so. If we could see ourselves as others see us, the book says. Perhaps this cure can be done with mirrors. You will have to help, Miss Polite. (*He goes to shelf upstage and returns with a good-sized mirror. He stands downstage from table and a little to the left of* JANE, *holding the mirror so she can look into it.*) Now, what do you see?

JANE: Just me. What's so wonderful about that?

DR. MANNERS: Miss Polite, see if you can't do something.

NURSE: Yes, Doctor. (*She pulls up* JANE'S *socks, unbuttons her sweater and buttons it up right and then steps out of the way.*)

JANE (*Looking in mirror and shaking her head stubbornly*): It's still me.

DR. MANNERS: Dear me—dear me.

NURSE: I have an idea, Doctor. (*She goes to shelf and returns with big pink hair ribbon. Standing behind table and to right of* JANE *she ties it around her head catching all the loose ends of hair.*)

JANE (*Looking in mirror for moment and then smiling*): My goodness, is that me?

DR. MANNERS (*All smiles*): That *can* be you, Jane, if you will just remember that being neat is good manners. Now you go sit by

Tommy and we'll see if the treatment lasts. (JANE *jumps down from table and sits right next* TOMMY.) Next.

MAZIE (*As she comes forward*): I'm next. My name is Mazie and I'm hungry.

DR. MANNERS: Indeed? And why are you hungry?

MAZIE: At breakfast Papa served the eggs
And there was one too many;
I shouted: Gimme that one—
Then he didn't give me any.

DR. MANNERS: Quite right—quite right. Folks with bad table manners shouldn't be allowed to eat. And I suppose you have all the other bad habits—like grabbing for food and banging your knife and fork on your plate.

MAZIE (*Grinning*): I broke a plate banging on it.

NURSE: My, I don't know where you'll start on this one, Doctor.

DR. MANNERS: Well, we mustn't be discouraged. Sometimes the worst cases are the easiest to cure. I think we'd better put her on the scales, Miss Polite.

NURSE: Just step over here, Mazie. (*She leads her to scales.*)

MAZIE: What good will weighing do?

NURSE: We'll see. Now do as Doctor says. (MAZIE *steps on scales and* DR. MANNERS *stands back of scales reading them. He shakes his head.*)

DR. MANNERS: My—my. (*He shakes his head again.*)

MAZIE: What's the matter? I thought I weighed enough.

DR. MANNERS: Not on these scales, my dear. These scales weigh your consideration for others and you fall very short—very short.

MAZIE (*Frightened*): Is that bad?

DR. MANNERS: Indeed it is. It may affect your whole life. It will make you lose friends. Yes, yes, we'll have to build you up. Hmmm, that new medicine, Miss Polite—Consideratone, they call it. Have we any?

NURSE: I'll see. (*She goes to shelves upstage.* DOCTOR *leads* MAZIE *downstage center.* NURSE *returns with bottle of pills.*) Yes, we have it, Doctor.

DR. MANNERS: Good—good. Now, hold out your hand, Mazie. (*As she holds out hand* DOCTOR *drops pill onto it.*) Now, take that.

MAZIE (*Frowning*): Only one?

DR. MANNERS: Ah, ah, now remember your manners. (MAZIE *stops frowning and takes pill. The door opens and* BILLY *comes in very slowly while* SUE *rushes in.*) Well, and still they come. You sit with the others, Mazie. (MAZIE *sits down and* SUE *rushes to scales and jumps on them.*)

SUE (*Jumping up and down on scales*):

My mother says my company manners
Are as bad as they can be;
I knock vases off the tables
When she takes me out to tea.

NURSE: No wonder. (*Pulling her off scales*) Stop jumping. You'll break the scales.

BILLY (*Speaking up*): *My* mother says I dawdle
And I always make folks wait;
No matter where I'm going,
I always get there late.

DR. MANNERS (*Frowning*): Dear me, dear me. We'll have to see what we can do for both of you. What is your name, little girl?

SUE: Sue.

DR. MANNERS: Bad company manners—playing with things that don't belong to you. Perhaps some of that Touch-me-not lotion rubbed on the hands will restrain her, Miss Polite.

NURSE: Very well, Doctor. (*She gets jar from shelves and rubs some lotion on* SUE'S *hands, then leads her to chairs and* SUE *sits with others.*)

DR. MANNERS (*Turning to* BILLY): And as for you, young man—

BILLY: My name's Billy.

DR. MANNERS: Well, Billy, tardiness is very bad manners indeed.

(*Looking up in his book*) Hmmm, now, let me see. (*Turning pages, then stopping*) Under tardiness we find—main fault is never getting started. If once off to a good start, patient usually stays on time. (*Shaking finger at* BILLY) Young man, you've got trouble with your self-starter.

BILLY: I have?

DR. MANNERS: Yes, and I think we know what to do about it. Miss Polite, the Pep-up Ray.

NURSE: Yes, Doctor. (*She goes upstage and carries light machine downstage left. She places chair from desk near lamp.*)

DR. MANNERS: Now we're ready. (*He leads* BILLY *to chair.* BILLY *sinks into chair and starts to go to sleep.* DOCTOR *turns on light and leaves it pointing at* BILLY. *Then he takes watch from pocket and looking at it, counts slowly.*) One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. (BILLY *jumps and sits up straight.* DOCTOR *switches off light.*) Ah, an excellent reaction.

BILLY (*Standing up*): Say, I feel different. May I go now? I've got to hurry.

DR. MANNERS: No, you wait just a few minutes. I want to double-check on all of you children. (*To others*) The rest of you come over here, please. Miss Polite, if you would give me my stethoscope. (NURSE *goes to shelves and brings stethoscope. Children line up stage center.*)

TOMMY: But why do you have to double-check, Dr. Manners? I don't feel like slamming doors any more.

JANE: And I like looking pretty.

MAZIE: I want to go home and say, please, may I have my breakfast?

SUE: I want to try out my new company manners.

BILLY: And I want to start hurrying so I won't keep people waiting for me any more.

NURSE: My, Dr. Manners, you certainly have worked wonders.

DR. MANNERS: Yes—yes, so it seems. But I can't do it all. The reason I have to double-check, children, is to see if these good reactions are going to last. Bad manners are funny things. You think you've got over them and then they come back.

Nurse: Oh, but Doctor, there must be some way to make good manners permanent.

Dr. Manners: Yes, there is but it has to come from inside each child, and it all depends on one thing—the heart. That's why I want to listen to their hearts. You first, Tommy. (*He puts stethoscope on* Tommy's *arm and then on his forehead.*)

Tommy: But my heart isn't there.

Dr. Manners: No, it isn't. (*Putting stethoscope in right place*) Your heart is in the right place and that's very good—very good. (*Then going to* Jane *and listening to her heart*) And so is yours in the right place. (*Then to* Mazie, *listening to her heart*) Ah, a good healthy beat. (*Then to* Sue *and* Billy, *listening to their hearts*) Good—good. All your hearts are in the right place.

Billy: But Doctor, what have our hearts to do with it?

Dr. Manners: Everything, my boy, everything. If your heart's in the right place you will want to be considerate of others and that's really the whole secret of good manners.

Mazie: But Doctor, there are so many things to remember about good manners.

Jane: Yes, Doctor, suppose we want to be good but don't know the right thing to do?

Dr. Manners: Then you just do what your heart tells you to—you use common sense. Just remember to treat others as you would like to be treated by them. When in doubt, do the kind thing—that will be the courteous thing and it will be good manners. Now do you understand what I mean?

Tommy: I understand good manners
Are easy as can be,
If I think of other folks
And not just I and me.

Jane: Looking neat and pretty
Is part of manners, too;

You must remember other folks
Have to look at you.
MAZIE: I must be polite at table
For it's surely very rude
To make other folks unhappy
So they can't enjoy their food.
SUE: I mustn't touch and play with things
That don't belong to me;
When I visit other folks
A lady I must be.
BILLY: Being tardy isn't nice,
It isn't common sense;
It's thoughtless and it causes
Much inconvenience.
DR. MANNERS: Exactly! Very good, children. Very good. You have the secret. (*Then smiling and nodding his head*)
Good manners are quite simple,
Not hard at all, you'll find,
If you think of other people first
And remember to be kind.

THE END

Green Leaf's Lesson

by Deborah Newman

Characters

Jack Frost
Winter Wind
Green Leaf
Red Leaf
Brown Leaf
Yellow Leaf
Orange Leaf

Time: *Autumn.*

Setting: *The forest.*

At Rise: *The Leaves are clustered at the foot of a tree.* Green Leaf *hides behind them.* Jack Frost *stands nearby, surrounded by buckets of paint and a large box. In his hand he holds a paint brush.*

Jack Frost:
Folks just don't know the work that goes
Into making winter clothes.
I have to use so many tricks
To get my paints correctly mixed.

Red Leaf:
Jack Frost, Jack Frost, I'd love you much
If you would give me one more touch
Of flaming orange at my head,
Or else a dab of brilliant red.

Jack Frost (*Dipping brush in pail and touching* Red Leaf's *head*):
Yes, here you are—I'm glad to please.
Well, there now, that was done with ease!

BROWN LEAF:
I feel so gay I'd like to dance.
I'm smart enough for Paris, France.
JACK FROST:
Why, so you are, and this is why:
I ordered some Parisian dye
Straight from my helpers over there
They'll be so pleased to know you care.
YELLOW LEAF:
I'd like a scarf of silver lace
Or something to set off my face.
ORANGE LEAF: And I, a string of beads to wear.
RED LEAF: And I, a ribbon for my hair.
JACK FROST:
One at a time, please! Now, let's see . . . (*Looks in box*)
The ice spiders have worked for me.
They wove a frosty web—'twill do
As a lovely scarf for you.
(*Takes out scarf and gives it to* YELLOW LEAF)
My elves strung chestnuts to make beads
With clasps of watermelon seeds.
(*Gives beads to* ORANGE LEAF)
And here's a clip of gilded wheat . . .
It's not a bow . . .
RED LEAF (*Taking clip*): But it is sweet!
ALL:
Oh, thank you, thank you, you've been kind
Such lovely clothes for us to find.
We won't forget what you have done,
And now we're off to have some fun.
JACK FROST:
Yes, that's it—you've a part to play
On this sunny autumn day.
You must show off your clothes to all

So people will be glad it's fall.
You're really quite a lovely sight . . .
Now, off you go—and please, don't fight!
YELLOW LEAF:
We won't. But please, where shall we go
When winter winds begin to blow?
JACK FROST:
Why, to the flowers in their beds,
By then they'll be such sleepyheads.
Be sure you keep them warm 'til spring.
It's really such an easy thing!
ORANGE LEAF:
Oh, yes, that's right. You've told us so.
And now, come on, I want to go.
BROWN LEAF:
Let's go down to the stream that sighs
And sings to us sweet lullabies.
RED LEAF:
Goodness, that's far too cold for me.
No, it's the town I want to see!
JACK FROST:
Now, wait a minute—there's a breeze
Waiting for you near those trees.
And if you want to look your best,
Each leaf must stay with all the rest.
Folks will be glad it's autumn weather
When they see you dance together.
ORANGE LEAF:
Yes, of course, Jack Frost is right,
For one leaf's not much of a sight.
JACK FROST:
I'm glad you see that for it's true . . .
And now, be off, you've jobs to do.

ALL:
We're going now to have some fun,
Then to the flowers when fall is done!
JACK FROST:
I'm counting on you, leaves. Now, go,
For soon I think we'll have some snow.
Good-bye, good luck, I'm proud of you,
I wish my elves could see you too.
(*Leaves exit, all but* GREEN LEAF *who stands by himself near the tree.*)
They're gone. I hope they do take care.
My, but that old tree does look bare!
But look, what's this? One I forgot?
He doesn't even have a spot
Of autumn color on his cloak!
Well, Jack Frost, this is quite a joke.
GREEN LEAF:
Go way—I don't want to be seen.
I always want to remain green.
JACK FROST:
And so you hid from me—I see.
But little leaf, that's so silly!
GREEN LEAF:
It's not! I hate the fall, I do!
I'm sorry that the summer's through.
I loved the warm and perfumed breeze,
The bright sunshine, the waving trees,
The fluffy clouds, the deep blue sky,
The singing brook, birds flying by.
Now winter's near to spoil it all . . .
I know that it comes after fall.
JACK FROST:
But staying green won't help, you know

Seasons must come and then must go,
And in each there's something good.
Why, I thought all leaves understood.

GREEN LEAF:
But you see, I like green best,
That color makes me happiest!

JACK FROST:
Ah, that is something you'll regret,
But I've things to attend to yet,
So if you think and change your mind,
Just call, for I'm not hard to find.
(*He takes paint buckets and exits.*)

GREEN LEAF (*While he is speaking,* WINTER WIND *enters blowing*):
He needn't think he can scare me,
The bravest leaf on this old tree.
I don't care if the flowers die.
I won't go dancing . . . no, not I!

WINTER WIND: Well, that's a selfish thing to say!

GREEN LEAF:
Oh! Who are you? Please go away!
You make me cold—your breath's like ice.
I don't think you're very nice.

WINTER WIND (*Pleased*):
Do I really make you cold?
Good! That's just what I was told,
But for a winter wind I'm small,
I thought I'd freeze nothing at all.

GREEN LEAF:
You're freezing me. I'm shivering here. (*Shivers*)
I can't keep warm—oh, dear, oh dear!

WINTER WIND:
Dancing's good for warmth—why not try?
Oh, I forgot—you'd rather die

Than do anything so silly.
Your family does look willy-nilly!
GREEN LEAF: They don't! They're handsome as can be.
WINTER WIND: But you'd rather be green, I see.
GREEN LEAF:
Well, I *would* like a bright new cloak . . .
Oh! I am sorry that I spoke.
WINTER WIND: Are you?
GREEN LEAF: No, that's not quite true.
Oh, dear, I don't know what to do.
WINTER WIND: I'll call Jack Frost—
GREEN LEAF: Oh, no you don't!
I won't leave here, I won't, I won't!
WINTER WIND:
Remember that gay tulip bed,
In spring they were yellow and red,
And looked so gay they made birds sing . . .
GREEN LEAF (*Dreamily*):
Yes, that was way back in the spring.
WINTER WIND:
One was sobbing as I passed by,
I was so cold I made her cry.
GREEN LEAF:
That's mean of you—why must you blow
And freeze up all the flowers so?
WINTER WIND:
But I must coat the lakes with ice
And people think they look quite nice.
The children should have cheeks so red . . .
Leaves must protect the flower bed!
GREEN LEAF:
Do you mean that tulip wants me?
That now I must leave this old tree?

WINTER WIND:
Of course I do! Now, let me call
Kind good Jack Frost, and he'll fix all.
GREEN LEAF: No, wait!
JACK FROST (*Entering quickly as* GREEN LEAF *speaks*):
Did someone speak of me?
Why, Green Leaf, you're still here, I see.
I met your family just close by.
They missed you and they wondered why
You weren't dancing with them now.
They needed you to show them how.
GREEN LEAF: They needed me?
WINTER WIND: The flowers, too!
JACK FROST: Now, wouldn't it be mean of you . . .
GREEN LEAF:
To let them down? Oh, yes it would.
I guess I've not been very good.
JACK FROST:
Well, here's a cloak—it's shiny new,
And red is just the shade for you.
(*Gives red cloak to* GREEN LEAF *who puts it on*)
WINTER WIND:
I'll take you to your family
I see them dancing round a tree.
I'll tell that tulip, never fear,
You'll keep her warm until next year.
GREEN LEAF:
Oh, thank you, you're both very kind
And now, please wind, if you don't mind,
I want to dance with all the rest,
And show them I'm the very best.
And then we will all work together
Protecting buds from winter weather.

JACK FROST:
Good little leaf—you understand
Why all of us work hand in hand?
GREEN LEAF:
In spring we helped make all things green
And for birds' nests we made a screen.
In summer we gave people shade,
And lovely rustling songs we made.
In fall we have our work to do,
In winter we are useful too.
JACK FROST:
Summer, winter, spring and fall,
Four seasons—and I love them all.
GREEN LEAF:
And I, Jack Frost, I love them too!
And now, I'll go. Good-bye, thank you!
(WINTER WIND *takes* GREEN LEAF *by the hand and they exit.*)
JACK FROST:
Good-bye! He's happy as can be.
Well, there is still more work for me.
Good little leaf! I must tell all
About the things you've learned this fall.

THE END

Too Much of a Good Thing

by Margaret Parsons

Characters

MRS. DONALDSON
JANE, *her daughter*
DAVID, *her son*

SPRITES: (*from three to eight*)
  MITZIE
  SPRITZIE
  FRITZIE
  BLITZIE
  KITZIE
  RITZIE

PIXIES: (*from three to eight*)
  GUB
  BLUB
  DUB
  CHUB
  SLUB
  THUB

SCENE 1

SETTING: *A room of the* DONALDSON *home.*

AT RISE: MRS. DONALDSON'S *evening wrap is on chair left back.* JANE *is curled up in one of the easy chairs reading.* MRS. DONALDSON *enters in evening dress.*

MRS. D.: Come, Jane, wash your hands. It's time for supper.

JANE (*Crossly*): Oh, what do I have to wash my hands for? They're clean.

MRS. D.: Now, Jane, don't argue. Of course your hands are dirty; they almost always are. Let me see them. (JANE *shows her hands.*) That's not my idea of clean hands. Now hurry. (JANE *drops book in chair and goes slowly off left.* MRS. DONALDSON *goes right and calls upstairs.*) Dave! *David!* Come to supper, and wash your hands before you come down. (*She goes off left and returns with two plates of food. They contain bacon and scrambled eggs, baked potato and spinach. She sets them on the table, on which is already a bowl of apples and a pitcher of milk. She pours out milk. Enter* DAVE *right.*)

DAVE (*Going to table and looking at food*): What's for supper? Oh, say, Ma, I don't like spinach, and we had it last week.

MRS. D.: And you'll probably have it next week, so you'd better learn to like it. (*At door left*) Hurry, Jane.

DAVE: Might as well try to hurry a turtle as hurry her.

MRS. D.: People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

DAVE: What do you mean by that? (*Sits at table left.*)

MRS. D.: You're not always on time for meals yourself.

DAVE: Oh, well— (*Begins to eat. Enter* JANE *from left.*)

MRS. D.: Come, Jane, sit down before your supper is cold.

JANE: Where's Grandma?

MRS. D.: She has a headache and I took her tea to her room. (JANE *sits at right of table.*) Now you children are all right: she's in the house in case of anything. But please be quiet and don't disturb her. Father and I are going to the Munroes' for dinner. You are big enough to eat supper by yourselves and wash the dishes. Jane, you can wash and David can wipe. (*Gets cloak and puts it on.*)

JANE (*Now eating*): I hate to wash dishes.

DAVE: If I have to do anything, I'd rather wash than wipe.

MRS. D.: Well, you settle that between you. I left a couple of old-fashioned chocolates on the kitchen table, which you may have *after* the dishes are done. And be sure to go to bed at quarter of eight. (*Goes to mirror and primps.*)

JANE: Oh, Ma, can't we stay up to listen to Sally Simpson on the radio?

MRS. D.: What time does she come on?

JANE: Nine o'clock.

MRS. D.: Certainly not. (*Comes to table and stands behind it.*) That is way past your bedtime. (DAVE *has taken up a big piece of bacon in his fingers and is putting it in his mouth.*) Dave, use your fork. And be sure to eat all your spinach. Now be good children. Goodbye, dears.

BOTH (*Rather sullenly*): Goodbye, mother. (*She goes out right.*)

DAVE: I hate spinach.

JANE: No worse than I hate scrambled eggs.

DAVE: Why is it the things that are good for you don't taste good?

JANE: Dunno. I wish I could order the meals for a week or two.

DAVE: Me, too. I'd have cherry pie and ice cream and cream puffs for every meal.

JANE: And loads of candy and pop and never, never, never any milk. (*Picks up glass of milk, makes a face, drinks a little, makes another face.*)

DAVE: And we'd never wash our hands—

JANE: Nor brush our teeth—

DAVE: Nor clean our nails—

JANE: Nor comb our hair. Mine snarls and hurts *terribly*.

DAVE: And we'd never go to bed if we didn't want to— (*Rises and stands behind table.*)

JANE: But stay up and listen to the radio all night—

DAVE: And we'd get California and western cities when they are having their best stuff—

JANE: And we'd never, never, *never* wash any dishes.

DAVE: I'd say not.

JANE (*Dreamily*): Gee, wouldn't it be swell!

DAVE (*Sighing*): Wouldn't it!

JANE (*Back to earth*): Well, it *isn't* like that, so hurry and finish your spinach so we can wash the dishes and have our candy.

DAVE (*Sitting, disgusted*): One piece of candy! What's one piece of candy, I ask you?

JANE: Well, it's one better than none.

DAVE: And I don't want an apple.

JANE: She didn't say we had to eat the apples, so we won't.

DAVE: Nor drink any more milk: I had one glass.

JANE (*Picking up her dishes and starting towards door left*): But *eat that spinach* and hurry up. (*Exit.*)

DAVE: Oh, all right. (*His tone is exasperated. He winds the whole lot of spinach around his fork, opens his mouth and rams it in. It is a tight fit, but it goes.*)

JANE (*Offstage*): Are you coming?

DAVE (*Mouth so full he can hardly talk*): Ye-ah! Ah co-in'. (*Exits with dishes.* JANE *returns. She glances at window, then goes to it. Looks out.*)

JANE: Oh, David, there's one star in the East. Isn't it pretty. (*Enter* DAVID *who joins her.*)

DAVE: The first star I've seen tonight. I guess I'll wish on it.

JANE: David, I read in a book that any wish wished on the first star is bound to come true. (*They are both center back.*)

DAVE: Well. . . .

JANE: Oh, let's try it.

DAVE: I think it's silly, but we might as well. (*Both kneel on chairs looking out windows so they do not see what goes on in front.* JANE *at right,* DAVE *left.*)

JANE: I'm going to think of a good wish.

DAVE: I'm already thinking of the best.

BOTH (*Together*):

Star light, star bright
First star I've seen tonight
I wish I may, I wish I might
Get the wish I wish tonight.

(*Enter* SPRITES *from right. Three are enough to use, but there may be six or eight.*)

MITZIE (*Entering, looks at children, stops, goes to door and beckons*): Come on in, Sprites. They're making a wish.

SPRITZIE (*Entering*): I hope it's a good one, Mitzie. (FRITZIE *and* BLITZIE *come on. They huddle in a group, left, talking together.*)

FRITZIE: If it's not a good one, we won't be called to fulfill it.

BLITZIE: No, the pixies will come, and heaven knows what mischief they will do. (BLUB *and* GUB *appear at door left.*)

SPRITZIE: Hush! Here come the pixies.

GUB (*Taunting*): What are you doing here, you goody-goody sprites!

SPRITZIE: We are here to carry out the children's wishes—

MITZIE: That is, if they are good ones.

GUB: They won't be.

BLUB: Not in the mood they're in tonight. *We'll* be called on.

JANE: I wish. . . . (*Without turning around*)

BLITZIE: Hush! Listen and we shall hear. I know the wishes will be good ones.

GUB: And I know they'll be bad ones. He, he! He, he! (*Dances about in glee.*)

BLUB: Ho, ho! Ho, ho!

DAVE: Well, go ahead, what do you wish?

JANE: I wish that we could live somewhere where we could eat just what we wanted to—

DAVE: No spinach—

JANE: Nor potato—

DAVE: Nor milk—

JANE: Nor carrots—

BLUB (*Pointing his fingers at* SPRITES): See! What did I tell you!

BLITZIE: Oh, dear, oh dear! (*Begins to weep into her handkerchief. All the others pull out theirs and weep.*)

DAVE (*Continuing with wish*): And that we never had to go to bed—

JANE: Nor wash dishes—

DAVE: Nor wash our faces— (BLUB *and* GUB *point both fingers at* SPRITES *and advance upon them, as they sorrowfully back out.*)

BLUB (*Waving them out*): Go! Go!

GUB: They don't want *you.*

BLUB: No, no! No, no!

GUB: So you must go!

BLUB: Yes, you must go. (SPRITES *are now off.* BLUB *and* GUB *take hold of each other's hands and swing around in a circle as fast as they can.* JANE *and* DAVE *turn and see them.*)

DAVE: Look. What's that?

JANE: They look like pixies.

DAVE: What are they doing here?

JANE: Let's ask them. (DAVE *comes down left,* JANE *down right.* JANE *and* DAVE *on either side of* GUB *and* BLUB.)

DAVE: Who are you?

JANE: What are you doing here? (GUB *and* BLUB *stop swinging.*)

GUB: We are pixies. (*Low bow, hand on heart.*)

BLUB: We come to serve you. (*Same business.*)

JANE: Oh, how wonderful!

GUB: Let's call the rest.

BLUB: Let's. (*They go to door left, and call as many as there are.*)

GUB (*Calling*): Dub! Chub! Come on in!

BLUB: Slub! Thub! Here's some fun. (*Then they turn,* BLUB *leading, and march on, and around the table, single file, each with right arm on shoulder of one in front, singing to the tune of Jingle Bells, with hops and steps as marked.*)

ALL:

Naughty Pixies we,
For plain food we don't care,
When you see us come you'll know
There's mischief in the air.
Hey, ho, ho! (*Three hops on right foot*)
Hey, ho, ho! (*Three hops on left*)
Marching to and fro (*One hop forward on right, one on left, one on right, one on left*)
Spreading trouble far and wide (*Three right, three left*)
As on our way we go. (*One right, one left, one right, one left*)
Hey, ho, ho! (*Three right*)
Hey, ho, ho! (*Three left*)
Marching to and fro (*One right, one left, one right, one left*)

Spreading trouble far and wide (*Three right, three left*)
As on our way we go. (*One right, one left, one right, one left*)
(*They line up in two groups, one with each child in center, and sing song through again. If only two or three* PIXIES *are used, this song may be omitted.*)

GUB: We've come to take you to a land where you need never eat anything you do not want.

SLUB (*Rubbing his stomach and grinning*): Yum! Yum!

GUB: Where you need not go to bed until you want to—

DAVE: And that will be *never*.

THUB: Nor wash, unless you want to.

JANE: As though anyone would ever *want* to wash.

DAVE: Come on, let's start. I want to get quickly to that wonderful land.

BLUB: Take my arm, brother. (*Offers* DAVE *his arm.*)

GUB: And you mine, sister. (JANE *takes his arm.*) The rest will go on ahead and prepare for you. Fall in. (*They form in double file,* THUB *and* SLUB *leading, then* CHUB *and* DUB, *then* BLUB *and* DAVE, *then* GUB *and* JANE. *They march around the table, all singing the* PIXIES' *song, and then go off left. After a few seconds* DUB *and* CHUB *return, carrying draperies and cloths.*)

DUB: Quick! We must work fast if we are to disguise this room before they return.

CHUB: I suppose Blub and Gub are marching them all over the place, making them think they are going far from home.

DUB: Exactly. (*Takes remaining dishes from table and carries them off left.*)

CHUB (*Throwing colored cloth over the table*): There, that will make the table look different.

DUB: I'll fix up these chairs to look like thrones. (*Tosses some cloths over armchairs to cover up upholstery.* SLUB *and* THUB *enter carrying big baskets of flowers and greenery, which they set about at back of stage.*)

SLUB: Here, these will dress up the room and make it look different.

THUB: Quick. Work fast. They'll be here soon. (*They work fast. The children themselves can think of ways to make the change. Enter* GUB, BLUB, JANE *and* DAVE *from left.*)

JANE: What a long walk! I'm all tired out.

DAVE (*Seeing other* PIXIES): Hello, are you here already?

SLUB: Yes, we can go faster than mortal beings.

JANE: But what a lovely place!

DUB: Will your royal highness deign to have a seat? (*Motions to chair by table, which has had a drape thrown over it. Makes low bow.*)

JANE: Oh, thank you. (*Sits*)

DUB (*Running around to other side*): And this is for you, fair sir! (*Another low bow.* DAVE *sits there. The* PIXIES *never walk, they always trot or skip.*)

THUB: And now what will your royal highnesses have to eat?

DAVE: Can we order anything we want?

THUB: Absolutely.

DAVE: Well, to begin with, I'll have cherry pie. (*Walks to left*)

THUB (*Taking pad from pocket, begins to write*): Cherry pie.

JANE: And I'll take cream puffs. Two of them.

DAVE: I'll have three, and half a dozen doughnuts.

JANE: Oh, yes, half a dozen for me, too, and a chocolate eclair.

THUB: And what will you have to drink?

DAVE: Orange pop. Two bottles.

JANE: You can mix my drink: One part grapeade, one part root beer, a dash of gingerale and the juice of three lemons. (*Counts on fingers as she comes down right.*)

DAVE: That ought to be good.

JANE: You can't have that. I thought of it. (*Leans in front of* THUB.)

DAVE: I don't see why I can't. (*Also leans in front of* THUB, *who is between them.*)

THUB (*With both arms outstretched, he separates the two children who are starting to quarrel*): It's hardly worth while to quarrel over it.

I'll bring plenty of both orders for both of you. And you might like some ice cream to top it off.

JANE *and* DAVE (*Together*): Oh, yes.

DAVE: Raspberry sherbet and chocolate ice cream.

JANE: Chocolate for me with hot fudge sauce.

THUB: Very well. I will bring it all immediately. By the way, (*Looking at his pad.*) do you care for any meat and vegetables with this meal?

DAVE (*Emphatically*): No vegetables. But you can bring six or eight hot dogs if you want to.

THUB: Very well, sir. Pixies all, I need your help. Fall in. (*They form behind* THUB, *and march off singing* PIXIE *song.*)

JANE: Isn't this fun?

DAVE: I should say so.

JANE: I wonder how long it will take them.

DAVE: It shouldn't take long, on account of their being Pixies. (*Enter* GUB *with box of candy, tied up as a fancy package. Puts it on table.*)

GUB: You forgot to mention candy, so I brought some for you to be nibbling on.

JANE: How wonderful! Can we eat it now? (*Runs to back of table, right.*)

GUB: Certainly.

DAVE: And not have to wait until after the meal? (*Goes left of table.*)

GUB: I should say not. In this fair land you can have candy for breakfast, dinner, and supper, and any time you want in between meals. (*Skips off.*)

JANE: Let's open it now. (*They do so.*)

DAVE: All right.

JANE: Let me have the ribbon. It's so pretty. (*Folds it up while* DAVE *undoes package.*) Um, doesn't it look good! Which piece do you want?

DAVE: I don't know as it makes much difference which I start on as long as I can have all I want, instead of just a couple of pieces.

JANE: This looks like a pully one. (*Takes one. They both sit and eat with great relish.*)

DAVE: I like the squashy kind. (*Enter* THUB. *Bows low.*)

THUB: Your royal highnesses, the feast is ready. (*Others march in to* PIXIE *song music, each holding a dish high in both hands. They march around table, then set dishes on table and stop, forming crescent around back of table.* JANE *and* DAVID *watch eagerly as the food is set on the table.*)

JANE: Oh, what perfectly lovely cream puffs!

DAVE: And look at the doughnuts. (*Puts one on each finger of his right hand.*) I'm going to eat five.

JANE: I think I'll begin on the ice cream, because it might melt. (*As they begin to eat, the* PIXIES *sing their song and the curtain falls.*)

* * *

SCENE 2

SETTING: *Same, a few minutes later.*

AT RISE: *The table is cleared except for a dish of candy.* DAVE *is asleep in the big armchair right. His hair is mussed, his face is dirty, his necktie askew, and he looks generally messed up.* JANE *comes in from left, yawning. She too is no longer the clean, spruce child we first saw.*

JANE: You asleep! (*Goes to him and shakes him.*) Wake up, wake up. Are you going to sleep all day?

DAVE (*Yawning and stretching*): Might as well. Nothing else I have to do.

JANE (*Shaking him again*): Oh, come on, wake up. Let's have some fun. Didn't you go to bed last night?

DAVE: No, I slept right here. I always wanted to stay up all night

JANE: How was it?

DAVE: Well, not what you'd call comfortable. (*Rises and comes down right*) I guess a bed is better if you're going to sleep. And I couldn't seem to keep awake. (*Yawns*)

JANE (*Coming down left and leaning on chair*): Let's see, how many days have we been here?

DAVE: This is the third.

JANE: And the Pixies have never denied us a wish yet. (*Picks up a piece of candy from a dish on the table, looks at it with disgust, and drops it back in dish.*)

DAVE: No, they're good to us all right.

JANE: What are you going to order for breakfast?

DAVE (*Listlessly*): Dunno. (*Enter* THUB *from left. Comes down right of table and stands between them.*)

THUB (*With a bow*): Ah, your royal highnesses are awake. What would you like to order for your meals today?

DAVE: Oh, I really don't care, Thub. Anything you bring is all right.

THUB: I'm sure I know your royal highnesses' taste by now. I have ordered breakfast for you.

JANE: I'm not very hungry. (*Walks listlessly to right of stage.*)

THUB: Ah, but you will be when you see what I have planned for you: orange pop to start with, then pancakes swimming in maple syrup, chocolate with the cup half filled with whipped cream; and to top it off, some of that fudge cake you enjoyed so much the first night you were here. (*Both children, looking sick, turn away from him.*)

DAVE: You *do* take good care of us. But I wish you'd add coffee to it.

THUB: Very well, I will see to it. (*Exits left.*)

JANE: Why coffee?

DAVE: Well, we're not allowed to have it at home, so I thought I'd try it.

JANE: You won't like it. It's nasty bitter stuff. I tried some out of mother's cup one day when she had gone to the telephone, and I didn't like it a bit. (*The* PIXIES *are heard singing outside.*) Here come the Pixies now.

DAVE: They must be bringing our breakfast. (*Both sit as before. The* PIXIES *march on, singing and bringing breakfast. They set it on the table. There may be a covered dish instead of pancakes.*)

THUB: Is there anything else you'd like?

DAVE: No, we'll look after ourselves.

JANE: Yes, you needn't stay. I know you have lots of business to attend to.

THUB: Very well. Fall in. (*They march off.*)

JANE: Do you want some pancakes?

DAVE: No. Do you?

JANE: Not much. My stomach feels queer. (*Puts hand on stomach.*)

DAVE: I've got a headache. (*Hand on head*)

JANE: I should think you might have.

DAVE (*Cross*): I'd like to know why.

JANE: Your head looks as though it would ache. You haven't brushed your hair since you left home. You look a fright.

DAVE (*Getting crosser and beginning to shout*): It's nothing to what you look like. (*Leans over table towards her.*)

JANE: You'd better get a mirror before you say that. (*Leans over table.*)

DAVE: Get a mirror yourself!

JANE: Well, you needn't get cranky, if you do look like Old Scratch.

DAVE: Who's cranky, I'd like to know?

JANE: Let's stop quarreling and eat.

DAVE: Eat? I couldn't eat a thing on that plate if I were hired to. Just to look at that syrup and that fudge cake makes my head go around. (*Rises*)

JANE: My stomach feels worse than ever. (*Rises*)

DAVE: I wish I had that second glass of milk I didn't drink the last night we were at home.

JANE: And I wish I had that apple. Oh, wouldn't an apple taste good! (*Sound of* SPRITES *singing outside.*)

DAVE: What's that?

JANE: I hope it's not those grinning Pixies coming back. The more I ache, the more they grin. (*The* SPRITES *come on, stepping lightly and singing gayly to the tune of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush."*)

We are the happy, healthful sprites,
The happy sprites, the healthful sprites,
We are the happy, healthful sprites,
And we come to you in the morning.

(*Half turn to* JANE *and half to* DAVE. *They beat time with forefinger of right hand.*)

We're very fond of wholesome food,
Of wholesome food, because it's good,
We're very fond of wholesome food,
And we eat it every morning.

(*Face front, put two hands together under right cheeks, and tip heads as if going to sleep.*)

We go to bed at eight o'clock,
When the clock strikes eight, we're never late,
We go to bed at eight o'clock,
And sleep right through to the morning.

(*Clap hands over head and then at sides in time to music. Every other one falls back, so they have plenty of room.*)

We take plenty of exercise,
It's lots of fun to play and run,
We take plenty of exercise,
Beginning every morning.

(*They form two circles around children, join hands, dance around them singing first verse.*)

JANE: And who are you? (*They stop dancing and form two half circles around children.*)

MITZIE: We're the *good* sprites.

FRITZIE: We grant *good* wishes.

DAVE: Why didn't you come sooner, before I had a headache?

RITZIE: We couldn't come until you made a good wish. The Pixies fill the naughty wishes.

BLITZIE: How did you like all the fine rich food they brought you?

JANE: A little of it goes a long way.

KITZIE (*Who has been poking her fingers into the dish of candy*): The candy looks good.

JANE: Would you like some?

KITZIE: Love it.

JANE: Then take it, take it all.

KITZIE: Why, don't you like candy?

JANE: I do . . . but not so much of it. I feel now as though I'd never want another piece.

BLITZIE: You will, though.

JANE: Well, you eat that.

MITZIE: All right. We've just had our breakfast. (*Each runs to table, takes a piece of candy and eats it.*)

KITZIE (*From downstage*):

A piece of candy comes most handy,
If it's begun when the meal is done.

SPRITZIE: Now what would you like besides the apple and glass of milk?

DAVE: I'd like to go home and have a good night's sleep in my own bed.

JANE: And I'd like— (*Hesitates.*)

SPRITZIE (*Urging*): Yes, what would you like?

JANE: Well, I'd like to comb my hair. It's very uncomfortable.

MITZIE: What easy wishes to grant! Look. (*She and the others whisk off drapes, and* JANE *recognizes her own furniture.* KITZIE *brings apple and milk back and sets them on table.* BLITZIE *hands* JANE *a comb. The tablecloth is left on.*)

JANE: Why, we *are* at home.

DAVE: We've been here all the time.

JANE: But where are father and mother?

DAVE: Yes, they must have come home two days ago.

MITZIE: But that is part of the magic. It's been a dream.

SPRITZIE: Sort of a mad dream.

BLITZIE: And dreams don't take up any time.

DAVE: So we are just back where we started.

RITZIE: Exactly.

FRITZIE: Except that you have learned something.

JANE: We certainly have.

FRITZIE: And wholesome food isn't so bad after all.

DAVE (*Solemnly*): If I had to choose between living on cream puffs and living on spinach, I'd choose the spinach.

ALL SPRITES: Hoorah! (*Wave right hands as if cheering.*)

MITZIE: That's one lesson learned. Now let's teach them our song.

JANE: We'd love to learn it. (*They line up across stage,* JANE *at extreme left,* DAVE *at right. Children and the* SPRITES *sing their song.*)

THE END

Mr. Bates Goes to the Polls

by Nina Butler Reay

Characters

MR. BATES
MRS. BATES
MR. MOORE, *a neighbor*
OFFICER
CHICKENS

SETTING: *The front porch of the Bates home.*

AT RISE: MR. *and* MRS. BATES *are sitting on the porch. He is reading a newspaper, and she is knitting.* MR. MOORE *walks by and greets them.*

MR. MOORE: Good evening, neighbors.

MR. BATES (*Putting down his paper*): Good evening, Mr. Moore. You're getting home from work a bit late tonight, aren't you?

MR. MOORE: Yes, this is Election Day. I had to stop and vote, you know. I suppose you went to the polls early?

MR. BATES: Oh, no, I never bother to vote. Too much trouble.

MR. MOORE: But you shouldn't feel like that. There are some mighty important things on the ballot in this election.

MRS. BATES: That is what I tell him every year, Mr. Moore, but he doesn't think so. Now *I* always vote.

MR. MOORE (*To* MR. BATES): Aren't you interested in the laws of our city and country, Mr. Bates?

MR. BATES: Oh yes, but what does my one little vote amount to? Besides, I help pay big salaries to the legislators and congressmen to do the law-making for me.

MR. MOORE: But sometimes the wrong people get in office and try to pass laws we don't want. The only way we can stop them is by using the power of our vote.

MR. BATES (*Stretching his arms above head*): I'll let you and Mrs. Bates worry about that. I'd rather sit here and read the sports page.

MRS. BATES (*To* MR. MOORE): He's hopeless, Mr. Moore. It's just a waste of breath trying to make him change his mind.

MR. MOORE: I guess you are right, Mrs. Bates. But remember, (*Turning to* MR. BATES) a wise man changes his mind, you know.

MRS. BATES (*Nodding her head*): That's right, Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Well, I must be getting along home to supper now. (*Starts moving away*) You still have time to go and vote, Mr. Bates, the polls don't close for another hour yet. Goodbye.

MR. *and* MRS. BATES (*Together*): Goodbye. (MR. MOORE *leaves, and* MRS. BATES *gets up from her chair.*)

MRS. BATES: I guess I had better go and put the chicken on to fry. (*She exits.* MR. BATES *takes a pillow from the chair she vacated and puts it at his head, propping his feet on empty chair.*)

MR. BATES: I'll just about have time for forty winks before supper. I sure want to have a good appetite for that fried chicken we're going to have. (*He leans back and closes his eyes. In a moment the* OFFICER *enters, seats himself nearby and watches* MR. BATES *as he sleeps. Presently* MR. BATES *stirs, opens his eyes and puts his feet on the floor.*) Ho-hum! (*Stretches his arms and sniffs the air*) Smells like that chicken is done, and I am hungry as a bear. (*Turns about and notices* OFFICER.)

OFFICER (*Standing up*): I'm sorry, Mr. Bates, but you can't have any of that fried chicken.

MR. BATES (*Excitedly*): I can't have any! What do you mean? It's *my* chicken, isn't it? *I* paid for it I'll have you understand, and *I* intend to eat it!

OFFICER (*Shaking club at* MR. BATES): Oh, no you're not. It is against the law to eat fried chicken now.

MR. BATES (*Angrily*): Against the law? Since when? And by the way, who are you, may I ask?

OFFICER: I am the Law Enforcement Officer. I was just voted into office today. I, and the law against eating fried chicken.

MR. BATES (*Frowning*): Do you mean that there was a law on the election ballot today against eating fried chicken?

OFFICER: Yes, indeed there was.

MR. BATES (*Sadly*): Oh, what a calamity! If I had known about it I certainly would have gone and voted!

OFFICER: It was printed on the ballot, just as plain as could be. But then, of course you never read the ballot. But the chickens all read it, and you should have seen them marching to the polls to cast their vote for it!

MR. BATES (*Unbelievingly*): *Chickens!* Why, chickens can't vote!

OFFICER: How do you know, Mr. Bates? Do you ever go to the polls to see who votes? (*Looks behind him*) See, here come some of them now. (*Enter the* CHICKENS, *who hop about in a sort of stiff-legged dance, flapping their wings and pausing now and then to cackle and crow. They dance around* MR. BATES' *chair while he watches them in surprise. When they finish he speaks.*)

MR. BATES: You chickens seem very happy about something this evening.

FIRST CHICKEN: Oh, indeed we are happy! Cock-adoodle-doo! Cock-adoodle-doo!

SECOND CHICKEN (*Singsong voice*): We won the election! We won the election! (*Serious voice, pointing a wing at* MR. BATES) It is against the law now, for anyone to eat fried chicken, so we chicks will all live to a ripe old age.

MR. BATES (*Jumping up angrily*): Well, I don't care! Law or no law, *I'm* going to eat fried chicken! My wife has just cooked one, and I am going into the house this very minute and eat all that I can hold! (*He starts toward door, but the* OFFICER *blocks the way, while the* CHICKENS *cackle and jump around excitedly.*)

FIRST CHICKEN: Don't let him get away, Law Enforcement Officer! Don't let him get away!

SECOND CHICKEN (*Hopping about*): Hold tight to him, Officer! Don't let him get away! It's the law that no one shall eat fried chicken, and it is your duty to see that the law is enforced! (OFFICER *seizes* MR. BATES *by one arm and struggles with him.*)

OFFICER (*Shaking* MR. BATES): Come, come, Mr. Bates, it is no use to rave and rant. A law is a law, you know. (MR. BATES *ceases struggling and sits down in chair, his head in his hands.*)

MR. BATES (*Sadly*): Oh, what a calamity! *What* a calamity!

OFFICER: Yes, it is sad for you. And to think, the law was carried by a single vote.

MR. BATES (*Looking up*): You mean—you mean that if one more person had voted against it, the law forbidding fried chicken would not have been passed!

OFFICER: Yes, just one more vote was all that was needed.

MR. BATES (*Jumping up*): What time is it?

OFFICER (*Looking at his watch*): Ten minutes of six, Mr. Bates.

MR. BATES: Hurrah! There is still time for me to vote! Where is my hat? (*Searches frantically for it; loudly*) Where is my hat? (*The* OFFICER *smiles and nods his head approvingly, beckons to the* CHICKENS, *and all of them tiptoe out, just as* MRS. BATES *enters.*)

MRS. BATES: Good gracious, what are you shouting about? Come on in the house and eat the fried chicken before it gets cold.

MR. BATES (*Finding hat on back of chair*): Supper will have to wait, my dear. I have only a few minutes left to get to the polls and cast my vote!

MRS. BATES (*Surprised*): Vote! Why, surely you don't mean that!

MR. BATES: Indeed I do mean it! I just woke up, and such a nightmare as I had! Mr. Moore was right. A wise man changes his mind. (*He dashes off.*)

MRS. BATES (*Looking after him*): Well, I declare! I wonder what it was that he dreamed. (*Shrugs her shoulders and turns toward door*) I guess I had better go put the chicken in the oven to keep warm until he gets back from voting. (*She exits.*)

THE END

Follow the North Star

by Owenita Sanderlin

Characters

MARGERY DINGLE, *a little girl*
URSA MINOR, *the Little Bear*
DRACO THE DRAGON
URSA MAJOR, *the Big Bear*
QUEEN CASSIOPEIA
KING CEPHEUS
POLARIS, *the North Star*

TIME: *Night.*
SETTING: *A mountain top and a starry sky.*
AT RISE: *A little girl is sitting on the bare, dark mountain top, crying.*

MARGERY (*Sobbing herself to sleep*): Mother! Mother! Mother!—Oh, if I only knew—which one—was the North Star. Then I'd know how to get home. But there are so many stars—so—many—stars. (*Sleeps. In comes the* LITTLE BEAR, *head over heels. Lights go up.* LITTLE BEAR *does not look very much like a bear—he has a long tail, and he is covered with stars. But he is just as playful and jolly as any bear cub.*)

LITTLE BEAR (*Shaking her gently*): Well! what's the matter with you?

MARGERY (*Rubbing her eyes, getting up*): I want to go ho—ome.

LITTLE BEAR: Why don't you go home, then?

MARGERY: I'm lost. I can't find the way.

LITTLE BEAR: Why don't you ask Polaris, silly?

MARGERY: Polaris? Who's that?

LITTLE BEAR: The North Star, of course. Everybody knows Polaris.

MARGERY: Well, I don't. Where is he?

LITTLE BEAR: At the end of my tail. (*Somersaults.*)

MARGERY: But you have such a long tail. I can't see the end of it.

LITTLE BEAR: Just keep on looking. You will.

MARGERY: You aren't much help. I'm all mixed up. Who are *you?*

LITTLE BEAR: I'm the Little Bear.

MARGERY: You don't look like a bear.

LITTLE BEAR: Well, I *am* a bear. So there!

MARGERY: Where are you going?

LITTLE BEAR: Around.

MARGERY: Around where?

LITTLE BEAR: Oh, just around. I go around every night. (*Tumbles, does some tricks.*)

MARGERY: Around *what?*

LITTLE BEAR: Around Polaris, silly.

MARGERY: Well, *please* tell me—(*Squeals*) Oooh! Who's that? (*Enter a dragon. He looks pretty much like a dragon, and there are stars all over him, too.*)

LITTLE BEAR: Oh, that's Draco the Dragon. Hi, Drag!

DRACO (*Sulkily*): Sssssss! (*Coils up in a corner. This takes him a long time, because he is so long.*)

LITTLE BEAR: Draco isn't very sociable, you know. He gets all worn out dragging around every night; there's so much of him, you see.

MARGERY: I should say there is. Does he know—(*Squeals*) Oh, who's that? (*Enter* BIG BEAR. BIG BEAR *is much like* LITTLE BEAR, *only she wears an apron and dust-cap, and has her knitting—and of course she is much bigger. There are stars all over her, too.*)

BIG BEAR (*To* LITTLE BEAR): You'd better hurry up, Ursa Minor. You'll be late. How do you do, Draco? And who—?

DRACO: Sssssssssssss. (BIG BEAR *walks back to him, and they whisper together.*)

MARGERY: What a funny name. Ursa Minor. Is that your name, Little Bear?

LITTLE BEAR (*With dignity*): That is my *Latin* name. It's just the same thing as Little Bear, really. But you know how mothers are. They have to have *fancy* names.

MARGERY: Is she your mother? She doesn't look much like a bear, either.

BIG BEAR (*Joining them*): Don't be disrespectful, young lady. *Certainly* I'm a bear. I'm Ursa Major. What's your name?

MARGERY: Margery Dingle. (*She curtseys.*)

BIG BEAR (*Severely*): Why aren't you home in bed?

MARGERY (*Beginning to cry again*): I'm l—l—lost!

BIG BEAR (*To* LITTLE BEAR): Get along now, Ursa Minor. (*Giving him a spank*) Don't dawdle.

LITTLE BEAR (*Turning a somersault*): But I'd like to help the little girl, Mamma!

BIG BEAR: I'll 'tend to the little girl.

LITTLE BEAR (*Reluctantly*): Well, good-bye, Margery. You just keep on looking for the bright star at the end of my tail. (*Handsprings out.*)

MARGERY: I will. Good-bye, Little Bear.

BIG BEAR (*Suspiciously*): Now then, young lady, if I don't look like a bear, what do I look like?

MARGERY: Uh—uh—well—uh—sort of like a—a dipper. Little Bear does, too. With a long handle.

BIG BEAR: The idea! The very idea! A dipper, indeed! (*Knitting furiously.*) Hmph!

MARGERY: Please, Ma'am, how will I find my way home? Little Bear said I should ask Polaris. Where can I find him?

BIG BEAR: Don't ask so many questions. Children should be seen and not heard.

MARGERY (*Bursts out crying*): Booooo—hooooo! I want to go home.

BIG BEAR (*Comforts her*): There, there. I'll show you, little girl. Just watch this star. (*Indicating one on her shoulder*) It points right straight at Polaris, the North Star. He will show you how to go home.

MARGERY (*Doubtfully*): Little Bear said Polaris was at the end of *his tail!* But you bears have such *long* tails!

BIG BEAR (*Proudly*): That's because we're star bears, little girl. We have *beautiful* tails. (*Suddenly*) Whoops! I must be getting along. (*Runs out, right.*) I'll be late.

MARGERY (*Wails*): But *where*—oh, dear, now what shall I do!

DRACO (*Uncoiling and humping over to join her at center*): Sssssss. Beautiful tail! *That* stump! Just look at *my* tail.

MARGERY (*Respectfully*): It must be several miles long.

DRACO (*Severely*): Several *skillion* miles long, you mean.

MARGERY: Oh, my! Dragon, can you tell me—?

DRACO (*Snappishly*): No, I can't. I'm supposed to be ahead of Ursa Major. Ask the King and Queen. (*Out he goes.*)

MARGERY: Who—? Oh, dear. Maybe I'd better call Polaris. He *might* hear me. Yoo-hoo! Polaris! Polaris!

VOICE OF POLARIS (*From far away*): Just follow me, little girl. I point to the North, where your home is. Your mother and father are worried about you, Margery.

MARGERY (*Desperately*): But I can't find you. Where *are* you?

VOICE OF POLARIS: I'm the brightest star, Margery. 'Way up high.

MARGERY: But there are so many stars!

VOICE OF POLARIS (*Fading away*): Just keep looking—keep—looking—(MARGERY *sinks down and begins to cry again. But she scrambles up as* QUEEN CASSIOPEIA *enters, followed by* KING CEPHEUS, *with two chairs. He places these to the left and right of* MARGERY, *and with great ceremony seats* CASSIOPEIA, *then returns to the other chair—left—and sits down himself.* QUEEN CASSIOPEIA *looks very mournful, and wipes her eyes frequently.* CEPHEUS *seems very fond of her.* MARGERY *stares.*)

MARGERY (*To herself*): This must be the king and queen! (*She* *kneels at their feet.*) Oh, please, King and Queen, show me how to go home.

KING: Oh-ho! This must be the little girl who ran away to climb the mountain all by herself.

MARGERY (*Miserably*): Yes, sir—(*Gulp*)—uh, *Sire*.

QUEEN (*Sadly*): Now don't scold her, dear. She feels bad enough. *I know!*

MARGERY (*Running to her side*): Please, beautiful, beautiful Queen, please help me.

QUEEN (*Sniffing*): Beautiful—yes, I was once very beautiful. But not any more. No more. (*Shaking her head*) I was so vain and proud that I have been punished. I have to sit up here, forever, in the sky.

KING: There, there, Cassy dear, don't cry. It's very nice up here in the sky. I like it.

QUEEN: Well—(*Wiping her tears*)—let's help the little girl find her way home, anyway, before I get turned upside down. I can't think when I'm upside down.

MARGERY (*Amazed*): Upside down!!

QUEEN: Oh, yes. Some of the time we have to sit upside down. Going around Polaris, you know. We all do—the bears, and Draco, and the king and I. It's very uncomfortable.

KING (*Pulling out his watch*): Er—uh—we'd better be getting along, dear.

QUEEN (*Jumping up*): Oh, good gracious, we'll be late!

MARGERY (*Running after her, as she hurries to the right exit*): Please, please, dear Queen, don't leave me! I w—w—want to go home. I'm cold—and hungry—and—

QUEEN (*Bends down and hugs her*): Of course, dear child. Cepheus, call Polaris!

KING (*Booming voice*): Polaris! Polaris! (*A bright star appears from the opening in the backdrop. It is* POLARIS, *in dark robes, with one brilliant star in his crown. He is very tall, and noble. He carries a scepter.*)

QUEEN: There he is, Margery.

MARGERY (*Hugs her*): Oh, thank you!

QUEEN: And when you get home again, don't forget me. I'll be looking down at you.

MARGERY: I'll never forget you.

QUEEN: Look for a crooked M up in the sky. Or W, if I'm upside down. That's about all you can see of me from so far away.

MARGERY: I'll wave to you every night. (*Exit* KING *and* QUEEN, CEPHEUS *carrying the chairs.* MARGERY *hurries over to* POLARIS.)

POLARIS: Come, Margery. Follow where I point. Follow the North Star! (*He takes* MARGERY'S *hand. The* LITTLE BEAR, DRAGON, BIG BEAR, KING *and* QUEEN *troop onto the stage, join hands and circle around them, faster and faster until the lights go down. In the darkness all the stars leave* MARGERY *alone, sitting in the center of the stage as at the beginning. She sits up, rubs her eyes. Dim light. She is holding* POLARIS' *scepter.*)

MARGERY (*Dreamily*): Follow the North Star—follow the North Star. (*She gets up slowly and walks toward the stars. She points with the scepter to each constellation, on the map.*) Let's see—W—Queen Cassiopeia must be sitting upside down! And there's the King—he's upside down too. And there is the Big Dipper—I mean Big Bear. She certainly does look like a dipper. Where's Draco? Oh, *I* see—he *is* skillions of miles long. And there, there, there is Little Bear, and at the end of *his* tail is—POLARIS! (*She jumps up and down excitedly.*) Oh, I know, I know, I know the way home. Mother! Mother, I'm coming! I just have to follow the North Star. (*She dances out through center exit.*)

THE END

Naughty Susan

by Mary O. Slingluff

Characters

SUSAN
ANN
MOTHER
GRANDMOTHER
FATHER
HENRY
MR. JEFFERSON

SCENE 1

SETTING: *The living room of a Quaker family in 1776.*

AT RISE: SUSAN *and* ANN *are seated on the footstools sewing on their samplers. They are quiet for a few minutes, then* SUSAN *jumps up off her stool and throws her sampler on the floor.* ANN *looks up in shocked astonishment.*

SUSAN (*Stamping on her sampler several times in an outburst of temper*): I hate samplers! Oh, how I hate them!

ANN (*Horrified*): Susan, how can thee say such a thing! And to be in such a dreadful temper, throwing thy sampler on the floor.

SUSAN: I don't care! I don't want to be good.

ANN (*Listening*): Here comes Mother! (SUSAN *hastily picks up her sampler, brushes the dirt off it and sits on her stool pretending to be sewing industriously when her* MOTHER *enters.*)

MOTHER: Here are my good girls working hard. And how is thee getting along, Ann? (*Taking* ANN's *sampler from her*) Why, it is all finished!

ANN (*Proudly*): The last stitch, Mother!

MOTHER: I am sure thee is one of the most industrious little

Quaker maids in all Philadelphia. We will tell thy Father this evening.

ANN: And will he write in the family diary that it is finished?

MOTHER: Thee may stand beside him while he writes, "My daughter Ann completed work upon her sampler today, July fourth, 1776." Now thee must put on thy bonnet for as soon as I have looked at Susan's work, we shall go for a walk. (*Exit* ANN.) What! Nothing done at all today—yesterday's stitches carelessly and wrongly done. And, look, thy sampler is soiled! What did thee do to it? (SUSAN *hangs her head sullenly.*) Answer me, Susan!

SUSAN: I stamped upon it, Mother.

MOTHER: And why did thee do that?

SUSAN: Because I hate samplers!

MOTHER: Surely thee does not mean that, Susan.

SUSAN: I do mean it!

GRANDMOTHER (*Entering. She is leaning on a cane and holds out her hand for help because she is blind. Meanwhile a muffled bell begins to ring offstage*): Help me to a chair. Now that my eyes have lost their sight, it seems that my ears are so much the keener. Does thee not hear a bell ringing long and loudly?

MOTHER (*Listening*): Thee is right. The State House Bell is tolling madly. What can it mean?

GRANDMOTHER: In all the years that I have lived in Philadelphia never has it rung thus—it only calls the hours. There must be news of great importance today.

MOTHER: Let us hurry to see what it is. (*Starting to help* GRANDMOTHER *from her chair*) I will get thy bonnet and shawl, for there is no time to lose. (*Calls offstage*) Come quickly, Ann.

GRANDMOTHER: No, go without me. I am too old and blind to go among so many people as must be gathering to hear the news.

SUSAN (*Happily*): Shall we wear our best bonnets, Mother?

MOTHER: Best bonnet, indeed! I cannot allow such a naughty little girl as thee to go with me. No. Susan, thy punishment must be to stay at home to work on thy sampler.

SUSAN: But thee said it was news of great importance—oh, please!

MOTHER: For one who has behaved badly the only thing of importance is repentance.

SUSAN (*With gesture of resignation*): Yes, Mother.

MOTHER (*Patting* GRANDMOTHER): Ann and I will tell thee about it when we come home. (*Exit* MOTHER.)

GRANDMOTHER: Here we are left behind, Susan. I, because I am old and feeble, thee because thee has been naughty. Is thee greatly disappointed?

SUSAN: Greatly, although it is not because of important news that I wish to be there but because of something quite different.

GRANDMOTHER: And what is that? (*Yawning*) I am very sleepy. Even the bell does not keep me awake.

SUSAN: Many times I have helped Old John, the State House bell ringer, and, oh, it is such fun. He puts my hand on the rope with his and together we pull to make the great bell call the slow hours. I am sure that Mother—if she knew—would think it more of my naughtiness. I can just hear her say, "Susan, how could thee? It is not proper for a little Quaker maid to ring the town bell." But the way it is ringing today—I must be there—I must! Grandmother, if I run away now to help Old John, will thee promise not to tell? Couldn't thee pretend to be asleep while I go? (*Waits for an answer and when there is none, tiptoes over to* GRANDMOTHER'S *chair, watching her carefully for a moment*) She is asleep! She really is! I'm going to ring that bell until it cracks!

CURTAIN

* * *

SCENE 2

SETTING: *The same.*

AT RISE: MOTHER *and* ANN *are seated beside the table which is set for dinner.* FATHER *is pacing the floor, looking at his watch.*

MOTHER: That naughty Susan! Where can she be, William?

FATHER: Up to some kind of mischief, but we cannot punish her on this great day. She is as excited as we are about the reading of the Declaration of Independence and has forgotten all about her dinner. But if she is not here by the time we have finished eating, I will go out myself to look for her.

ANN: Perhaps thee will take me along, Father. This has been such an exciting day. Wasn't it a wonderful Declaration?

FATHER: "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." Those are glorious words spoken on a glorious day.

ANN: "The Pursuit of Happiness"—that is what Susan wants always.

MOTHER: Or the pursuit of naughtiness. Is thee sure thee did not see her in the crowd at the State House, Ann?

ANN: No, Mother, but I remember now where she might have gone—to ring the bell in the State House Belfry.

MOTHER: Susan to ring the bell! How could a little girl ring the great bell of Philadelphia?

ANN: Many times Old John, the bell ringer, has let her pull at the bell rope with him. She says nothing makes her happier. It was Father speaking of happiness that reminded me.

FATHER: If it were Susan's small hand on the rope when the bell cracked for Liberty, I should be the proudest Father in all this city. (*Listening*) I hear thy Cousin Henry's voice in the hall. Perhaps he has found Susan.

HENRY (*Entering*): Cousin William, I ran all the way to tell thee. Susan is coming up the street now—and Mr. Thomas Jefferson is with her!

Others: Mr. Thomas Jefferson!

Father: Sit down, boy, get thy breath and tell us what this is all about.

Henry: No, I must hurry home to my dinner. They will be here in a minute and Susan will tell her own story. (*Exit.*)

Mother: Henry has certainly forgotten his manners today. William, I hear someone at the door now. (*Enter* Thomas Jefferson *holding* Susan's *hand.*)

Father: Mr. Jefferson, this is an honor indeed.

Jefferson: The honor is mine—and also that of escorting your daughter. I am proud to have made her acquaintance.

Father: Has Susan been up to more mischief, Mr. Jefferson?

Jefferson: Mischief to her thinking but not to mine. I will make my story brief, sir. After the reading of the Declaration of Liberty was over we went to inspect the crack in the bell. There we found Susan weeping bitterly. She was afraid that she would be in great trouble and disgrace since it was her hand on the rope with Old John's when the bell cracked with rejoicing. She dared not come home for fear of punishment so I came with her to explain the situation.

Father: No, Susan, there will be no punishment—only praise.

Susan: No punishment—not even for the sampler, Mother? I didn't work on it at all.

Jefferson: You do not care for sampler work, Susan? Ringing bells is more to your taste, perhaps?

Susan: Oh, much more!

Jefferson: But I am very fond of a well-made sampler. Will you make one for me to hang on the wall of my home in Virginia?

Susan: Yes, Mr. Jefferson. I will make you the most beautiful sampler in the world. But what words shall I put on it?

Ann: I know. Thee can take the words from the Declaration Mr. Jefferson wrote and say, "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."

Susan: Did *you* write it, Mr. Jefferson?

JEFFERSON: Yes, Susan. I wrote it for all naughty little girls like you throughout the colonies and so you write this for me on your sampler, "I, Susan, helped to crack the bell of Liberty in the Pursuit of Happiness."

SUSAN: I will, Mr. Jefferson, I will! Every stitch will be perfect and I will never, never be naughty again. I promise thee that, Mother.

MOTHER: Thee is an easy promiser, Susan.

SUSAN: "I, Susan, helped to crack the bell of Liberty in the Pursuit of Happiness on July the Fourth, Seventeen Seventy-six." Oh, I don't know which is more glorious—liberty or the pursuit of happiness.

JEFFERSON: You cannot have one without the other. Think a moment, Susan, and you will understand what I mean.

SUSAN (*Slowly*): I think this is it. Without happiness we cannot enjoy liberty and without liberty we are not free to look for things that make us happy.

THE END

The First Flowers

by Marie Lyon Wilson

Characters

PUGGY MUGGY	*brownies*
SILVER WING TWINKLING STAR EIGHT SMALL GIRLS	*fairies*

RAGS, *an old ragged man carrying a heavy pack on his back.*
QUEEN, *a slightly larger girl than the other fairies.*

SCENE 1

SETTING: *A beautiful forest in the springtime, many years ago.*
AT RISE: MUGGY *is very busy rolling a stone from near a small shrub.*

PUGGY (*Enters sprightly*): Hello Muggy! You seem quite busy this morning.

MUGGY: I'm only helping a young twig to grow straight. This stone was in its way. We must preserve the beauty of our forest.

PUGGY (*Seriously*): Forget the shrub and stone just now and listen to me. Have you seen Old Rags today?

MUGGY (*Walking toward* PUGGY): Do you mean the old man who carries the mysterious bag on his back?

PUGGY: Yes. He's an old miser who hoards all his money away. He's *so* selfish!! I thought you might like to help me play a trick on him as he comes through the forest today.

MUGGY (*Enthusiastically*): Oh! I'd love to. What shall we do?

PUGGY (*Calculating*): Well, listen! He carries his precious gold in a small pack on his back and counts it when he reaches a deep ravine in the far woods.

MUGGY: Oh! Does such a horrid man dare enter our beautiful forest?

PUGGY: Yes, but the fairies watch him and know exactly where he goes.

MUGGY (*Anxiously*): Do they really?

PUGGY: They do. He soon grows tired from his long journey and usually falls asleep just before he reaches the edge of our forest.

MUGGY (*Dancing*): Heigh! Ho! Heigh! Ho!

PUGGY: We'll go there, and after he's asleep—while the fairies watch—we'll punch holes in his pack so the coins will drop out, one by one, as he journeys along.

MUGGY (*Gleefully dancing about*): Heigh! Ho! It will serve the rascal right.

PUGGY: Come, let's be on our way. (*They leave the stage and* SILVER WING *and* TWINKLING STAR *steal from behind the trees where they have been hiding.*)

SILVER WING (*Excitedly*): Did you hear? The brownies are hiding in the forest for Rags. Shall we help them?

TWINKLING STAR: Yes! Surely! Yes!

SILVER WING (*Running*): Hurry. Hide. He's coming! (RAGS *enters staggering under his heavy load.*)

RAGS: The journey has been long and I'm tired, too tired to count my gold. My precious gold! (*The gold falls to the ground. He mutters as he sits beside the bag*) My precious gold! (*Wearily falls asleep and snores loudly.* MUGGY *and* PUGGY *enter, steal across the stage and punch holes in the bag of coins with knife.*)

MUGGY (*Rising*): Sh! Sh! (PUGGY *rises and the two* BROWNIES *quietly slip off the stage.* SILVER WING *and* TWINKLING STAR *come from their hiding place and dance around* RAGS. RAGS *moans and moves about.*)

SILVER WING *and* TWINKLING STAR: Sh! Sh! (*Hide behind trees.*)

RAGS (*Stretching and mumbling*): My precious gold! My precious gold! (*Jumping up quickly and finding his gold safe*) Ah, you are safe, my golden coin, and I have slept well and long. Now to the ravine. (*He puts the bag on his shoulder and resumes his journey. One by one the coins drop from his bag.*)

CURTAIN

* * *

Scene 2

Setting: *The same as Scene 1, a few hours later.*

At Rise: Muggy, Puggy, Silver Wing, *and* Twinkling Star *are on the stage.* Puggy *is sitting on the rock.* Muggy *is seated under a tree. Both are pouting.* Silver Wing *and* Twinkling Star *are standing near.*

Puggy (*Pouting*): The old man did lose his gold, didn't he? And Muggy and I caused him to do so!

Silver Wing: That you did, Puggy.

Muggy: Then why can't we punish him as we like?

Twinkling Star: We, too, want to change the gold into something else, so he will never be able to find it again. But can't you see, Puggy, that we want to change it into something beautiful?

Silver Wing: Yes, we do. Not into ugly snakes as you brownies suggest. Please stop your pouting and let us get busy before he misses it and comes to look for it.

Puggy: That's just what we want to do, change the gold into something that will keep him away from our beautiful forests forever.

Muggy: And snakes will do it!

Silver Wing: Oh brownies, we can't do that. Snakes are so ugly. Come now. Will you?

Twinkling Star: Since we can't agree and Puggy and Muggy did the work, I suggest that we call our queen to decide for us what we shall do with the gold.

PUGGY (*Pouting*): I still want snakes. But we will agree. We will call the queen.

SILVER WING (*Calling "oo-oo-oo." A small* FAIRY *appears*): Will you tell the Queen there is trouble in the Big Forest and that we need her help? (*The small* FAIRY *goes out and a moment later the* QUEEN *enters with* EIGHT TINY FAIRIES *accompanying her as trainbearers.* PUGGY *rises as she enters and escorts her to his place on the rock. The* QUEEN *is seated with the* EIGHT TINY FAIRIES *about her.* PUGGY, MUGGY, *and* TWINKLING STAR *are seated opposite them.*)

QUEEN: Puggy, will you tell me all that has happened? I would like to know just what is wrong.

PUGGY: We want to punish Rags, the old miser.

QUEEN: What has he done?

PUGGY: Oh, he's so selfish we want to teach him a lesson.

QUEEN: And what are you going to do?

PUGGY: We caused him to lose some of his gold, and now we'd like to change it into something so he can never find it again.

QUEEN: What would you suggest?

PUGGY: Muggy and I suggested snakes. They would keep him out of our forest forever. But the fairies disagree.

QUEEN: And that is your trouble?

PUGGY: Yes, we almost came to blows.

QUEEN: Silver Wing, what do you have in mind?

SILVER WING: Oh, Queen, we want something beautiful. We think snakes are horrible.

TWINKLING STAR: And Puggy and Muggy insist on having them!

QUEEN: Are you quite sure, Puggy, that snakes would serve your purpose?

PUGGY: Yes, quite sure. We would have some of them very large and quite poisonous.

QUEEN: Do you think that would add to the safety and beauty of our forest?

PUGGY *and* MUGGY: It would at least keep Rags away.

QUEEN: Aren't you brownies being just a bit selfish in your punishment of Rags?

SILVER WING: Indeed, they are. Even the lovely people who come would not be safe if our forest were infested with ugly, poisonous snakes.

TWINKLING STAR: And even the fairies would be afraid!!

QUEEN: I think you are quite right, Twinkling Star.

SILVER WING: Even the beautiful birds would be scared away! Since, of course, the brownies would have some of the snakes in our trees.

PUGGY: Oh, we didn't think of the danger to the birds, or to anyone except Rags.

MUGGY: We like the birds and the lovely people who come here just as well as you do.

QUEEN: I am quite sure you do, Muggy. May I offer a suggestion?

ALL: Oh, yes!

QUEEN: Then, I think the lost coins should be made into something which will make our forest and all the countryside more beautiful.

SILVER WING: Then everyone can enjoy them!!

QUEEN: I suggest that you change them into beautiful growing colors which will appear every spring.

SILVER WING (*Happily*): Oh, how lovely! And we shall call them flowers! They shall be our very first flowers!

QUEEN: Do you like the idea, Puggy and Muggy?

PUGGY *and* MUGGY: We're not quite so sure about it.

SILVER WING: Come now! Please do.

PUGGY *and* MUGGY: Oh, well. We'll forget it this once. Of course, the fairies always win.

QUEEN (*Rising*): So now that we are all happy again, shall we dance before parting?

ALL FAIRIES: Please do.

PUGGY *and* MUGGY: Heigh! Ho! Heigh! Ho! (*Dance, as the curtain falls.*)

THE END

All Houses Are Haunted

by Alice Woster

Characters

Boy
Girl
Mr. Jones, *the man who sells houses*
Strange Boy
Mystery Man
Match
Broken Stool
Knife
Fruit Jar
Poison Pill
Rocking Chair
Cooking Pot } *the haunts*
Throw Rug
Electric Cord
Gas Stove
Electric Fan
Nail
Iron

Setting: *Living room of a house.*

At Rise: Boy, Girl *and* Mr. Jones *enter. They are followed by* Mystery Man *who slips in, stands at side of stage and watches them.*

MR. JONES: I've showed you this house; we've gone clear through . . .
Now what do you think you'd like to do?
GIRL: This place suits me! What I'd like to do
Is to buy the house, and the furniture, too.
(MYSTERY MAN *shakes head in disapproval.*)
BOY: Yes, my sister's right; I think the same,
Give me the contract—I'll sign my name.
MR. JONES: I've left the papers in my car.
I'll hurry and get them. It isn't far. (*Exits*)
MYSTERY MAN (*To audience*): They're running a risk, but I guess I approve,
Provided they bring *me* along when they move. (*He runs to* BOY *and* GIRL, *taps them on their arms.*)
Go ahead and buy; it'll be all right.
I'll stay right with you, day and night.
BOY (*To* GIRL): Who is he? A friend of yours?
GIRL: No, I've never seen him before, I'm sure.
BOY (*To* MAN): Who are you, I'd like to hear?
And what makes you think we want you near?
MYSTERY MAN: Oh, you're bound to need me! You must always heed me!
Needn't pamper or pet me, but just don't forget me!
BOY (*Coldly*): Sorry—we just haven't any room *for* you.
GIRL: If you stay, anyway, we'll just have to ignore you.
(BOY *and* GIRL *turn backs to* MYSTERY MAN. MYSTERY MAN *droops sadly, slinks away and sits in chair at back, shaking head.*)
STRANGE BOY (*Hurrying in, hand out in protest. To* GIRL *and* BOY):
Stop! Don't buy it! I pray you, wait!
Have you already signed? Did I come too late?
BOY (*To* GIRL): Well! More queer people around this place!
(*To* STRANGE BOY) Excuse me—I don't recognize your face!
STRANGE BOY: No, I guess not, but don't be snooty.
I've come to warn you. I feel it's my duty.

Boy: Warn us of what? And why shouldn't we sign?
Girl: This is just what we've looked for. We like it fine.
Strange Boy: Take care! It might not be all that you wanted.
Let me whisper a secret: this house is haunted!
Girl: Haunted?
Boy: Haunted?
Girl: I feel badly shaken.
Boy: Don't worry yet. (*To* Strange Boy) You must be mistaken.
Strange Boy: No, I couldn't be *induced* to live here.
And I ought to know for I *used* to live here.
Just look at me, before it's too late. (*Shows bandaged arm.*)
What happened to me may also be your fate.
Boy: But there's no such thing as haunts. That's a joke.
Girl: They're just stories made up to frighten folk.
Strange Boy (*Shrugs*): You won't take my word so I'll bid you good morning.
But I hope you'll remember I've given you warning.
These dangers are real, and they're very near.
If you don't believe me—just listen—you'll hear!
(*He exits. Weird noises offstage.*)
Girl: I do hear something. And look! (*Points offstage*) What's that?
Oh, dear! My heart's going pit-a-pat!
(*The haunts dance in, making lunges and threatening gestures at* Boy *and* Girl. Girl *cowers.* Boy *steps back a little. The haunts make weird noises, according to their natures.* Electric Fan *goes bzzzzz;* Cooking Pot, *bubble-bubble-bubble;* Match, *hiss;* Throw Rug, *oops! oop!;* Broken Stool, *crack! crack! Others can moan.*)
Nail: You'd better be scared! You'd better squeal!
You're not imagining us! We're real!
Boy: Who are you? And what do you want?
And why must you come to our house to haunt?
Knife: We haunt everyone's house, I'm proud to relate,

Though some people don't find it out till too late.
All houses are haunted, far and near,
And we kill many people each day of the year.
(*The haunts all dance around and yell some more.*)
GIRL: Let's give up the house. I'm ready to quit.
I'm frightened, I may as well admit.
BOY (*To* GIRL): Wait just a minute. (*To haunts*) Cut out the rough stuff!
Quit trying to scare us! I think you're all bluff!
If you're as bad as you claim to be,
Tell how you'll harm my sister and me!
(*Each haunt steps forward as he speaks his piece.*)
MATCH: I'm a match, and I'm telling you, Stranger,
From my head to my foot I'm just chock full of danger.
STOOL: I'm the stool with a broken leg.
I'll toss you off; crack your head like an egg.
KNIFE: I'm a knife! I'll hide in cupboard or sink,
And stab you before you have time to think.
NAIL: I'm a shiny new nail, quite useful and trusty,
But watch out for me when I grow old and rusty!
FRUIT JAR: I'm the fruit jar on the stair.
I'll trip you when you're unaware.
POISON PILL: I'm a box of poison pills; the doctor prescribes me for certain ills;
But you might go to sleep and never wake,
If you happened to swallow me by mistake.
ROCKING CHAIR: I'm a rocking chair; if you stand on me,
You'll lose all my good will.
I'll try my very hardest
To throw you for a spill.
COOKING POT: I'm a long-handled cooking pot.
I and my handle both get very hot.
THROW RUG: I'm a throw rug; I'll probably throw you!
If I slip while you're walking on me, you'll slip too.

ELECTRIC CORD: I'm a frayed electric cord.
I'll pierce you like the sharpest sword.
GAS STOVE: I'm a gas stove. My deadly fumes
Will follow you round in all of your rooms.
ELECTRIC FAN: I'm a fan—a bad fellow to fight:
If you get too close, you'll feel my bite!
IRON: I'm an iron. If you leave me connected,
Your whole future life may be sadly affected.
(BOY *and* GIRL *look at each other and shiver.*)
BOY: I guess we're licked; we'll have to go.
Against so many we haven't a show.
GIRL: If we had some help, maybe we could stay.
Is there no friend around to help save the day?
MYSTERY MAN (*Rises, comes forward, timidly*):
I offered my aid and you told me to hike!
However, I'll still help you out if you like.
BOY (*To* GIRL): That man again! (*To* MYSTERY MAN) It seems to me
We still don't know your identity.
MYSTERY MAN: I won't keep you longer in suspense.
I'll tell you—I'm just Common Sense.
GIRL: Common Sense! I guess you're right.
Everyone needs you, day and night.
BOY: Yes! I feel much better since this revelation!
Perhaps we can handle the situation.
Stay close, Common Sense! With you here—Gadzooks!
I believe we can rout these threatening spooks!
Match, we'll teach you some discipline!
We'll "can" you, in a can of tin.
GIRL: Stool, you won't crack my head like an egg!
I'll put some splints on your broken leg!
BOY: Knife, I'll keep you in your case,
Then I'll always meet you face to face!

GIRL: Fruit jar, you'll be kept on a shelf!
We'll all be safe: Brother, I, and yourself.
BOY: Pills, you'll soon find out we're your betters:
We'll label you "POISON" in big red letters.
GIRL: Rocking chair, your fate is simple and fitting.
We'll see that you're used for nothing but sitting.
BOY: Cooking Pot, I don't think we'll get burned.
All that you need is your handle turned!
GIRL: Rug, I'll anchor you to the floor.
You won't throw anyone any more.
BOY: Cord, your career of crime is ended.
First thing I'll do is get you mended.
GIRL: Stove, your plans will be quickly blighted!
We'll keep you turned off except when you're lighted.
BOY: Fan—a corner for you, where you can't do harm.
We'll relax in your breeze, out of reach of your arm.
And Nail, when you're rusty we'll see that you go.
We can't run the risk of lockjaw, you know.
GIRL: Iron, you can't scare us, as hard as you try.
We'll keep you shut off, and your nose to the sky.
(*Haunts have fallen back, one by one. They look meek now.*)
BOY (*To* GIRL): It looks as if we'd changed their song!
(*To haunts*) Now all go back where you belong!
(*Haunts scurry away.*)
GIRL: We'll always treat them as we should
And then they can't help being good.
MR. JONES (*Enters*): The papers are here. Are you ready to sign?
BOY: Yes. (*Signs*) And now this place is mine.
Mine and my sister's, from this day hence!
We'll live safe and happy, with Common Sense!

THE END

Cinderella

by June Barr

Characters

CINDERELLA	FAIRY GODMOTHER
CHARLOTTE	COURT GENTLEMEN (3)
MARIE	PRINCE

SCENE 1

SETTING: *Kitchen of* CINDERELLA'S *home.*

AT RISE: CINDERELLA *is kneeling on floor, arranging skirt of* CHARLOTTE'S *gown, while* CHARLOTTE *preens herself in a hand mirror.*

CHARLOTTE (*Her smile fades as she glances down at* CINDERELLA): Hurry, stupid! The time draws near!

MARIE (*Entering from back left*): You look very pretty, sister dear!

CHARLOTTE (*Smugly*): Yes, don't I though! I love my hair!

CINDERELLA (*Shyly*): You'll be the most beautiful ladies there!

MARIE: Of course we will, you stupid girl!

CHARLOTTE (*Holding out hand with ring*): I'm wearing my most expensive pearl!

MARIE (*Touching lace at her throat*): I'm wearing my very finest lace!

CHARLOTTE (*Looking into mirror with satisfaction*): I've put some pink powder on my face.

MARIE: Oh, we'll be the belles of the ball, that's true!

CHARLOTTE (*Condescendingly to* CINDERELLA): I suppose you wish *you* were going, too!

MARIE: Her! The King's ball! With her ragged dress!

CHARLOTTE: And her sooty feet! And her hair a mess! (*They are overcome with laughter, while* CINDERELLA, *rising, stands looking down at floor.*)

CINDERELLA:

I can't attend the King's ball, I know,
But I'm glad to help you get ready to go—

MARIE:

That's all you're good for, to work and slave.

CHARLOTTE (*Advances and lifts hand threateningly*):

And while we're gone, you'd better behave!

MARIE:

Come, Sister, our coach—
We're off to the dance—

MARIE (*Laughing over shoulder as they exit through door at right*):
Doze in your cinders while you have the chance! (CINDERELLA *follows them to the door, and stands looking after them. Then she goes sadly to chimney corner and sits on hearth near fire. Presently she begins to sob heartbrokenly.* FAIRY GODMOTHER *appears from behind fireplace and stands looking at her.*)

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Don't cry, Cinderella.

CINDERELLA (*Looking up in surprise*): Who—who—are you?

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Your Fairy Godmother—I make dreams come true!

CINDERELLA: Oh! Oh! Could you help me? I wish—the King's ball—(*Begins to cry.*)

FAIRY GODMOTHER:

I can make you a princess, with no trouble at all!
Just go to the garden, as quick as can be,
And get me a pumpkin, the largest you see!

(CINDERELLA *runs out door at right, while* FAIRY GODMOTHER *stands in doorway smiling, then speaking through open door to*

CINDERELLA *offstage*) That's right! Put it down!—(*Waves wand*) —There! Is that nice?

CINDERELLA (*From offstage*): A *golden coach!*

FAIRY GODMOTHER (*Reaches under chair and hands out wire mouse trap*): Now take these fat mice—(*Hands mice out to* CINDERELLA, *then waves wand.*)

CINDERELLA:
They're beautiful gray horses!

FAIRY GODMOTHER (*Pointing outside*):
Bring that trap with the rat—(*Waves wand.*)

CINDERELLA:
Oh, Godmother! A coachman, all jolly and fat!

FAIRY GODMOTHER:
And those six bright green lizards—(*Waves wand.*)

CINDERELLA:
Why, they're footmen! How fine!
Oh! I just can't believe they're really all mine!

FAIRY GODMOTHER:
And now, my dear, just come and kneel down—(*Reaches out door with wand.*)

CINDERELLA:
Oh, Godmother! What a beautiful gown!
And these lovely glass slippers! How sparkling and bright!
Now I can attend the King's ball tonight! (*Joyfully.*)

FAIRY GODMOTHER:
Be sure to leave before midnight, my dear,
For at twelve these wonders shall disappear!

CINDERELLA:
Oh, I will, I will! And thank you so much—
For helping me with your enchanted touch!

CURTAIN

* * *

SCENE 2

SETTING: *Same.*
AT RISE: CINDERELLA *is talking with* FAIRY GODMOTHER.

CINDERELLA:
Oh, Godmother, it was the most wonderful ball!
And I wore the most beautiful gown of all!
And the Prince was so charming—we danced and dined—
FAIRY GODMOTHER:
Your sisters! I mustn't be here for *them* to find! (*Starts for hiding place behind fireplace.*)
CINDERELLA:
But wait! Fairy Godmother! Tomorrow night—
FAIRY GODMOTHER:
I know!
There's another ball—and you can go! (CINDERELLA *clasps hands, then stretches and yawns sleepily as sisters* CHARLOTTE *and* MARIE *enter from right.*)
MARIE (*Moving around* CINDERELLA *with distaste*):
Oh, the soot and the cinders! They make me feel creepy!
CHARLOTTE (*Gloatingly*):
If you'd been to the ball you wouldn't be sleepy!
MARIE:
The most beautiful princess in the world was there!
CHARLOTTE:
With a gown of fine lace, and pearls in her hair!
MARIE:
Everyone just adored her! The Prince made quite a fuss!
CHARLOTTE:
And she paid *great* attention to *us!*
CINDERELLA:
How lucky you are! Won't you lend me your dress?
I'm just longing to go to the ball, I confess!

CHARLOTTE:

Indeed, I will not! My fine yellow dress
On a dirty little cinder girl? Oh, what a mess! (*Goes around* CINDERELLA *with distaste.*)

MARIE (*Angrily*):

Come! You will go upstairs and help us get undressed!
We're going to tomorrow's ball, and need lots of rest! (*All exit at left.*)

CURTAIN

* * *

SCENE 3

SETTING: *Same.*
TIME: *A few days later.*
AT RISE: CINDERELLA *is sweeping hearth as* CHARLOTTE *and* MARIE *enter from left.*

MARIE:

Cinderella! I want you to mend this tear—(*Holds out dress as* CINDERELLA *comes quickly from hearth.*)

CHARLOTTE:

And I've left three pairs of shoes on the stair.
Before you go to your attic, I want them all shined—

MARIE:

And there's my best hood. (*Throws it on table*) I want it relined!

CINDERELLA:

I'll be glad to help out. Have you heard anything at all (*Shyly*)
About the beautiful princess who ran from the ball—

CHARLOTTE:

Just what we told you the other night—
She ran for the stair and vanished from sight.

MARIE (*Eagerly*):

And now the Prince has sworn to find
The maiden who left the glass slipper behind!

CHARLOTTE:

Yes, and he's going to marry her, what's more!

MARIE:

Listen! There's someone at the door! (*She goes quickly and opens the door at right, admitting three* COURT GENTLEMEN, *one of whom is carrying the glass slipper.*)

1ST COURT GENTLEMAN:

In the name of a Prince most fine and true,
We search for a maid who can wear this shoe.

CHARLOTTE (*Eagerly*):

Here! Let me try it!

MARIE (*Pushing her aside rudely, as she sits in chair*):

It's nearer *my* size! (1ST GENTLEMAN *hands slipper to* 2ND GENTLEMAN, *who tries it on* MARIE'S *foot.*)

2ND GENTLEMAN:

This is not the maiden the Prince will prize.

(CHARLOTTE *takes seat eagerly and* 2ND GENTLEMAN *tries it on her.*)

CHARLOTTE:

Try harder! You're not pushing at *all!*
I tell you, I wore these shoes to the ball!

(2ND GENTLEMAN *rises and passes slipper back to* 1ST GENTLEMAN.)

2ND GENTLEMAN:

It just won't go on—

3RD GENTLEMAN (*As* CINDERELLA *comes from her corner*):

Why, whom have we here!

CINDERELLA:

May I try the slipper?

3RD GENTLEMAN (*Taking her arm, escorts her to chair*):

Of *course*, my dear!

CHARLOTTE:

You try! How could it possibly fit *you!*

MARIE:

Get back to your corner, or I'll give you a shoe! (*Makes threatening motions with her own shoe which she has not yet put back on.*)

1ST GENTLEMAN:

Come now, my girls, she must have her chance—

CHARLOTTE:

A cindery girl like *her* find romance? (*All three* GENTLEMEN *gather round* CINDERELLA *and* 1ST GENTLEMAN *kneels to try slipper.*)

CHARLOTTE (*Shrilly*):

Get back to your corner by the fire!

1ST GENTLEMAN (*Looks up at others and all smile*):

Ah! We have found the Prince his heart's desire!

MARIE:

No! It can't be! It—just—can't—be! (*Watching in astonishment as* CINDERELLA *takes other slipper out of her apron pocket and puts it on.*)

FAIRY GODMOTHER (*Appearing from in back of fireplace*):

My dear Cinderella, do you need me?

CINDERELLA (*Jumping up in joy*):

Oh, yes, dear Godmother! My gown—that would show—

FAIRY GODMOTHER:

Of course! But such spells must be done in secret, you know! (*Takes* CINDERELLA'S *arm and leads her off left.*)

1ST GENTLEMAN:

Ah, it's good to know that our search is done—

CHARLOTTE:

You've made a mistake! She's not the one!

2ND GENTLEMAN:

Ah, but she is, for the shoe fit, you see—

MARIE (*Clutching his arm wildly*):

Have another shoe made, and make it fit me!

My mother will pay you whatever you say—
We can take Cinderella and hide her away—

3RD GENTLEMAN (*Laughs at her*):
My dear girl, that slipper is made not of glass
But the kindness and love of a sweet, gentle lass.

(*Several excited voices heard outside: someone calls "Whoa, whoa." "The Prince! He has come! He has followed us here—!"* 2ND GENTLEMAN *runs and opens door.* PRINCE *appears in doorway, right, and* CHARLOTTE *and* MARIE *curtsy low, while all three* GENTLEMEN *bend on one knee and rise again. The* PRINCE *bends his head, then looks across to door at back left of stage, where* CINDERELLA *has appeared. She has changed into ball gown.*)

PRINCE:
My Princess! You've found her! Ah, isn't she dear—
(*Hurries over and takes* CINDERELLA'S *hand and leads her to center of stage,* FAIRY GODMOTHER *following.*)
Sweet Princess, I've searched for you all through the land—
Please tell me you'll give me your heart and your hand!

CINDERELLA:
Oh, yes, dearest Prince!

PRINCE:
Then come, we shall go—

CHARLOTTE *and* MARIE (*Running after her*):
Oh, don't forget us! We're your sisters, you know!
(CINDERELLA *turns in doorway, right, and they throw themselves on their knees before her.*)

CHARLOTTE:
The mean things we've done—

MARIE: We're sorry for all!

CHARLOTTE:
We even tore up your invitation to the ball!

MARIE:
We'll be good to you, always, Cinderella dear!

CHARLOTTE:

We'll slave for you—work for you—don't leave us here!

(CINDERELLA *looks at* PRINCE, *who smiles and nods.* CINDERELLA *smiles down on sisters.*)

CINDERELLA:

Then come to the Palace, there's room and to spare,
And we'll all live happily ever after, there!

(CHARLOTTE *hugs* CINDERELLA *around knees, while* MARIE *kisses her hand. Then they rise and back away, curtsying.* CINDERELLA *and* PRINCE *exit, followed by the three* GENTLEMEN, *and then by* MARIE *and* CHARLOTTE. FAIRY GODMOTHER *watches them go, then raises her wand as though in blessing.*)

THE END

The Lion and The Mouse

by June Barr

Characters

THE LION
THE MOUSE
FIVE HUNTERS

SETTING: *A clearing in the forest.*

AT RISE: *The* LION *is asleep in the clearing. The* MOUSE *comes running in from left, stopping frequently to sniff the air and look around for danger. She sees the* LION, *throws up her hands in amazement, and goes closer.*

MOUSE (*Softly*): My! What a great and wonderful beast!
He must be the King of the Forest, at least.
(*Steps over* LION, *circles him, and just as she gets in front of him, the* LION *awakes.*)
LION (*Yawning widely*): Arrummph! Mmmph! (*Sees* MOUSE, *jumps up and throws* MOUSE *down, puts paw on her*)
And who might you be?
Don't you know better than to fool with me?
You're just the right size for me to eat.
And you know, you might taste very sweet!
MOUSE (*Fearfully*):
Oh, King of the Forest, please let me go!
I meant you no harm, and how do we know
Some day I may be able to help *you*.

LION (*Roaring with laughter.* MOUSE *puts hands over ears*): *You* help *me?* What could *you* do?

MOUSE: I might do *something*, and I meant you no harm—

LION (*Raising paw and letting* MOUSE *go*): All right, I won't eat you—feel no alarm.

MOUSE (*Running into brush*): Thank you, King Lion, I wish you good luck!

LION: I wish you the same, for you've plenty of pluck! (LION *starts slowly away to right, when* HUNTERS *enter from left and run quietly up behind him, motioning each other to be silent. They throw a net over the* LION *and pull him down, struggling and roaring.*)

1ST HUNTER: We got him! We got him! He's tight in the net!

2ND HUNTER: Don't begin bragging, he isn't safe yet!

3RD HUNTER: Hurry! Be quick, now! (*All the* HUNTERS *help fix net, pretending to drive stakes into the edges. In reality they can lay heavy weights on the edges of net.*)

4TH HUNTER: He's certainly strong!

3RD HUNTER: There! The last stake is driven! Now what can go wrong?

5TH HUNTER: You never can tell—

4TH HUNTER: He can't break away.

2ND HUNTER: We've got him at last!

1ST HUNTER: What a lucky day! (LION *growls and tries to thrash around, but is tightly held by net.*)

3RD HUNTER: Isn't he wonderful?

2ND HUNTER: Just look at his size!

1ST HUNTER: And look at that mane!

4TH HUNTER: He's really a prize!

5TH HUNTER: He's the finest Lion I've seen in an age.

3RD HUNTER: Well, shall we go back to the village and get a cage?

5TH HUNTER: Yes, we'll cage him and take him back to the King.

4TH HUNTER: What a present!

3RD HUNTER: The best any loyal subject could bring!

4TH HUNTER: We're sure to receive a reward for our pains.

1ST HUNTER: And remember, we all share alike in the gains! (*They start off, left.*)

2ND HUNTER: Shall I stay and guard him?

1ST HUNTER: Oh, he'll be all right!

3RD HUNTER: He's safe in the net.

4TH HUNTER: And it's fastened down tight!

2ND HUNTER: Let's go get the cage, then—(MOUSE *gives muffled sneeze.*)

1ST HUNTER: What's that?

5TH HUNTER: Someone sneezed! (*They pause and look back.*)

3RD HUNTER: Just a creature.

5TH HUNTER: That's all. (*They continue off.*)

4TH HUNTER: Won't His Majesty be pleased? (MOUSE *sticks head out, then carefully looking around, she comes out of bushes. Halfway to* LION, *she hears a sound, darts back to bushes. Comes out again, and goes over to* LION)

LION (*Sadly*): Oh, little Mouse, did you see what they've done?
Alas, this day is an unhappy one!
They'll carry me away in a cage and then
I shall never see my dear forest again!

MOUSE: Now, wait just a minute—

LION: Oh, woe is me!

MOUSE (*She has examined ropes*): Oh, King of the Forest, I can get you free!

LION: What can a mouse do? No, it's too late.

MOUSE: Now, you just be patient, please, and wait. (MOUSE *pretends to gnaw ropes. In reality she unfastens parts of net that are knotted loosely.*)

LION (*As* MOUSE *proudly shows him one loose rope*): That's nice, but what good can one rope do?

MOUSE: Now just you wait, and I'll gnaw them *all* through!

LION (*As* MOUSE *loosens another cord*): Oh, hurry, hurry, they'll be back any minute!

MOUSE: They'll find an empty net, with no Lion in it! (*Quickly loosens the third cord, then the fourth. The* LION *sticks his head partly through opening.*)

LION: Oh! I believe you can do it! Oh, hurry, please!

MOUSE: Of course I can do it! (*Puffing a little*) I'll gnaw these—and these—(*She loosens another cord, and another, and* LION *suddenly breaks free.*)

LION: I'm free! You've done it! (*Shakes net off his back*) You've set me free! And I thought you were too small to do anything for *me!*

MOUSE: I told you I'd repay—

LION: Yes, I guess in the end
A *little* friend is often the *greatest* friend! (*Voices are heard offstage*)

MOUSE: Listen! The hunters!

LION: They're close to us, too!
Let us hide in the brush and see what they'll do! (*They hide in brush as* HUNTERS *enter, left, carrying a large cage on poles. They set it down and look for* LION.)

1ST HUNTER: He's gone!

2ND HUNTER: Oh, he can't be!

3RD HUNTER: We tied him down tight!

4TH HUNTER (*Poking net with foot*): He couldn't get loose!

5TH HUNTER: Well, he's vanished, all right!

1ST HUNTER: The stakes are in place.

2ND HUNTER: But these ropes are gnawed through!

3RD HUNTER: A lion can't gnaw rope!

4TH HUNTER: Someone helped him.

5TH HUNTER: That must be true.

1ST HUNTER: Well, he's gone, and that's that.

3RD HUNTER: Who will tell our great King?

4TH HUNTER (*Turning angrily on* 5TH HUNTER): You would go and brag of the great beast we'd bring!

1ST HUNTER (*Wailing*): And now the King's waiting—

2nd Hunter: How angry he'll be!

5th Hunter (*Belligerently to all*): When I wanted to tell him, you were quick to agree!

4th Hunter: You got us excited!

3rd Hunter: And now he's got away!

2nd Hunter: Well, *I'm* not to blame, for I offered to stay!

3rd Hunter: You're in this with us!

1st Hunter: You can't just back out!

2nd Hunter: Oh yes I can! Good-bye! (*Leaves quickly, left*)

5th Hunter (*Also leaving*):
And there's surely no doubt
That I shall go too, for you are unfair.

4th Hunter: Come back!

1st Hunter: You'll pay for this!

3rd Hunter: If you leave us, beware!

4th Hunter: They've gone. And now, who'll tell our King?

3rd Hunter: Yes, who's going to tell him—that is the thing!

4th Hunter (*Turning to* 1st Hunter): It ought to be you, for you bragged more than I.

1st Hunter (*Pointing to* 3rd Hunter): No, it ought to be you!

3rd Hunter: Me? But why, tell me why?

4th Hunter: Well, someone must tell him. (*Starts toward exit, left*)

3rd Hunter: That much is true.

1st Hunter (*Turning to* 4th Hunter *as they exit*): It ought to be you!

4th Hunter: No, it ought to be you! (*They exit, still arguing, and when their voices fade,* Mouse *comes out of brush, followed by* Lion.)

Mouse: Are they gone?

Lion: Yes, they're gone, full of anger and spite.

Mouse: They didn't stick together—it just doesn't seem right!
Now their friendship is broken and never will mend!

Lion: Well, we'll stick together! Come along, little friend,
There's a part of this forest so deep and so green,

A place where the hunters never are seen,
We'll go there together—

MOUSE: What good friends we'll be!

LION (*Taking* MOUSE'S *arm*): Yes, I will help you, and you can help me! (*They circle the cage the* HUNTERS *left, and go off, right, arm in arm.*)

THE END

The Princess Who Couldn't Dance

by Lindsey Barbee

Characters

MARCIA	ALICIA
SYLVIA	BENECIA
GLORIA	PATRICIA

SETTING: *Part of the palace grounds.*

AT RISE: *Five little* PRINCESSES (SYLVIA, GLORIA, ALICIA, BENECIA *and* PATRICIA) *are all in a row holding out their pretty skirts, while another little* PRINCESS, MARCIA, *is standing in front of them. We know in a moment that she is telling them just how to dance.*

MARCIA:
Three steps to the right, and stand on your toe,
Bring feet together and curtsey low.
(*The little girls watching her do just as she does, stepping to the right and finally curtseying very deeply; but* PATRICIA, *who loses her balance, makes an awkward bow.*)
Dear me, Patricia, you almost fell.
You really don't do anything well.

SYLVIA: Patricia, you never will learn to dance.

GLORIA: To be light and graceful you haven't a chance.

PATRICIA:
Maybe I can't do your one-two-three;
But wonderful things have come to me.

MARCIA:
But, what, Patricia? I'd like to know
Just what are the things that excite you so.
PATRICIA: The flowers and the wind and the little brook.
MARCIA: They're for us all if we want to look.
PATRICIA:
But you don't want to look; you'd rather say
Your one-two-three and forget to play.
MARCIA:
Now let's do a waltz—like this (*Waltzes around quite prettily*)
You see
How pretty and easy your steps can be.
(*The five waltz merrily around, but* PATRICIA *is very awkward.*)
ALICIA:
Dear me, Patricia, what will you do
If somebody wants to waltz with you?
BENECIA:
We all will be asked to the palace ball;
And the way you waltz wouldn't do at all.
MARCIA:
Let us curtsey again—to left—to right. (*And, again, they make their little curtseys*)
We certainly make a beautiful sight (*But, again,* PATRICIA *loses her balance.*)
Patricia, I'm really in despair.
You're dreadfully clumsy—and you don't care.
PATRICIA: I care, but I just can't manage my feet.
MARCIA: Then straighten them out as a special treat.
SYLVIA: For some day a prince will ask you to dance,
GLORIA: And he'll never give you another glance—
ALICIA: If you step on his feet and tumble down—
BENECIA: You'll never, I'm sure, wear a royal crown.
MARCIA:
We've danced so prettily to and fro,

I think I'll call myself *Curtsey-Low.* (*She curtseys.*)

SYLVIA: I'd like to be known as *Twinkle-Toes.* (*Twirls around.*)

GLORIA:

It's lovely, and since it's the name you chose,
I'm *Magic Slipper.* (*Out goes her little foot*) That's pretty, too.

ALICIA: For me I think, *Fairy-Foot* will do. (*Balances on one foot.*)

BENECIA: *Light-as-Air*—how's that for a name? (*Around she waltzes.*)

MARCIA: Doesn't it all make a happy game?

SYLVIA:

And now, Patricia, what about you?
You haven't said just what you'll do.

GLORIA: Does thinking about it make you frown?

PATRICIA: I think I'll be known as *Thistledown.*

MARCIA:

Thistledown! *Thistledown*! Oh, dear me! (*Laughs behind her hand*)
That's just as funny as it can be.

BENECIA (*Laughing*): You're anything but light on your toes.

ALICIA (*Laughing*): You're very clumsy as everyone knows.

SYLVIA:

Come along, you girls—there's time to play
Before the musicians come our way.

GLORIA:

Don't forget that we dance tonight.
Our practice today must be just right.

BENECIA: Let's start together and run a race,

ALICIA: Then come right back to this very place.

(*The five run off at left, laughing and chattering; but* PATRICIA *stands a bit forlorn, looking after them but not attempting to follow.*)

PATRICIA:

I wonder what will happen to me
When I dance tonight where the court can see
How very awkward I am. They'll know

That I can't glide gracefully to and fro.
(*Suddenly a gay little voice comes on the air, and some unseen person whispers, quite clearly.*)

VOICE:
But you *can* glide gracefully to and fro.
This is the brook that tells you so.

PATRICIA:
Oh, what is that? Can it really be
That my little brook is talking to me?
(*Again comes the little voice*)

VOICE:
I turn to the left and I turn to the right,
I keep my balance—and so, tonight,
To the one-two-three you'll gently bend
Because the brook is your faithful friend.
(*Already* PATRICIA *is practicing her steps—one-two-three, stand on her toes and then curtsey. What's more, she's keeping her balance.*)

PATRICIA:
Oh, I can do it—I really can—
Thank you, brook, for your helpful plan.
(*Then, all of a sudden, there comes another voice—very sweet and very plaintive.*)

2ND VOICE:
Patricia, dear, just watch me sway
If you want to do it the proper way.
I'm your flower friend—this is my chance
To help you, my dear, learn to dance.
(*And* PATRICIA *begins to sway back and forth, and not once does she lose her balance.*)

PATRICIA:
Thanks, dear flower, oh, thanks a lot.
I'll sway back and forth in this fairy spot.
(*Once again comes a sighing little voice, almost like the strains of a wind harp.*)

3RD VOICE:
I am the wind, and I love you, too,
Waltz with me now, Patricia—do.
(*Before she knows it*, PATRICIA *is waltzing very beautifully*.)

PATRICIA:
I can waltz, dear wind—I'm as light as air!
I am blown like thistledown here and there.
(*And then, all of a sudden, all the other little* PRINCESSES *run in*.)

MARCIA:
The music is here—it's about to play.
Form your line in the usual way.
(*At the sound of the music they begin a gay little dance; and* PATRICIA *is dancing as prettily as her companions. From time to time, each of the* PRINCESSES *glances at* PATRICIA *in surprise; and as the music dies away and the dance is ended* MARCIA *rushes to* PATRICIA.)

MARCIA: Patricia! What happened?
You dance so well.

PATRICIA:
The brook and the flower have cast a spell;
The wind has given a magic chance.
The awkward princess has learned to dance!

THE END

In the Witch's House

by Rowena Bennett

Characters

WITCH
CAT (*Little Girl*)
BOY

SETTING: *The interior of the Witch's house.*

TIME: *Any day, in any week, in any year.*

AT RISE: *The* WITCH *is standing at the table mixing something in a big bowl. Her black* CAT *sits near her feet. As she moves to reach a spice can at the far end of the table, she stumbles over the* CAT.

WITCH (*Irritably*): Get out of my way, Midnight. You're always under my feet.

CAT (*Saucily*): I'm not in your way. You're in mine.

WITCH (*Going on with mixing*): Impudence! Why didn't I take away your voice when I turned you into a cat? You can say the sauciest things!

CAT: Why in the world did I ever come to live with you? That's what I'd like to know.

WITCH (*Laughing*): Heh, heh, heh! So you don't like being a witch-cat, eh? Well, I'm not going to change you back to a little girl, no matter how much you whine.

CAT: Don't worry. I won't whine. I've gotten over that. I know better than to expect favors from you.

WITCH: You're well fed and housed, aren't you?

CAT: If you call sour milk food, and a dirty house, a home.

WITCH: You don't know when you're well off . . . (*Sound of whistling is heard from outside.*) Listen! Do you hear somebody coming?

CAT (*Excitedly*): It sounds like a boy whistling. I used to whistle, once, when I was a girl. Wonder if I could do it now? (*She puckers up lips and tries, but only succeeds in making cat noises.*) MEOW! MEOW! MEOW! (*Whistling grows louder.*)

WITCH: Hush! It's a boy. He's coming here. You'll scare him away with all your meowing . . .

CAT: That's just what I want to do. (*She runs to closed door and calls through crack*) Go 'way, boy. Go 'way! Meow, meow, MEOW!

WITCH (*Going to door and pushing* CAT *aside with her foot*): Very well, Smarty, if you won't invite folks in, I'll go out and get them. (*She slips out slamming door behind her.* CAT *scratches at door but can't open it.*)

CAT (*Plaintively*): Meow, meow, meow. (*She runs over to window as though with sudden purpose. She pulls curtain back with her paw and looks out. Her back is now to door.*) Go 'way, boy! Go 'way! THIS IS A WITCH'S HOUSE. Where are you, boy? I can't see you. Do you hear me? THIS IS A WITCH'S HOUSE! (*Door opens cautiously and* BOY *peeks in.*)

BOY: Who called me?

CAT (*Turning around in surprise*): I did.

BOY (*Puzzled*): I don't see anyone but a cat.

CAT: You never heard a cat talk, I suppose?

BOY (*Excitedly*): Was it really you? You must be a *magic* cat.

CAT: I'm a witch cat. Didn't you hear me say this is a witch's house?

BOY: A witch cat! How exciting! May I come in and pet you?

CAT: I wouldn't if I were you. If you once get in you may never get out.

BOY: But the witch has gone away. I saw her take the path to town.

CAT: It may be a trick. She may only be pretending to go to town.

BOY: No. I'm sure she went. Anyway, I'm coming in. I've always wanted to see the inside of a witch's house. (*Enter* BOY. *As he gets to center of room the door bangs shut. He and* CAT *jump.*)

CAT: What did I tell you?

BOY: It was only the wind.

CAT: I don't think so. *Just try getting out.* (BOY *runs to door and tries it. It won't open. He beats on it, kicks it in vain, looks around at cat in despair.*)

BOY: I guess you were right.

CAT (*Sadly*): I guess I was.

BOY (*Trembling*): Ooooh! It's dark in here, and dirty, and smelly.

CAT: Did you think it would be like the outside? All frosting and gingerbread?

BOY: I thought it would be something better . . . ice cream, or pudding, or pie . . .

CAT: That's what *all* the children think.

BOY (*Trembling again*): W-what will the witch do with me?

CAT: Make you into gingerbread, most likely. (*She motions toward oven.*)

BOY: Ugh! I shouldn't like that.

CAT: First she'll leave you here a while to get you good and scared.

BOY (*Bristling*): Oh, is that so? Thinks she can scare me does she? Well, just let her try it! (*Clenches fists and spars the air.*)

CAT: Bravo! You're a *regular* boy.

BOY (*Encouraged*): She's not going to turn me into gingerbread, either. I'll find a way out.

CAT (*Sighing*): I wish I could help you find one. I've been trying to think of one myself for years . . .

BOY: You have? You want to get away from here, too?

CAT: Of course. It's no fun being a witch cat.

BOY: What made you one?

CAT (*Hanging her head*): I guess it was my own fault. I was a little girl, once. But I didn't like bothering to brush my teeth or wash my face. I thought it would be much nicer to be an animal and not have to worry about manners or dressing up . . .

BOY: But how did you get changed?

CAT: I was coming to that. You see, I used to run away and play in the alley all the time. Well, one day I met a witch there. She seemed to know just what I was thinking. She said if I'd let her change me into a cat, I could come home and live with her and never have to do any work or wash my hands and face . . .

BOY: And you're sorry now?

CAT: Of course. *Playing* in a dirty place was *one* thing. But *living* in it is another. I spend most of my time giving myself a bath with my tongue so I won't get to look like the witch. *She* never washes, you know, and her hair is all snarly.

BOY: But why don't you run home?

CAT: I can't. She keeps me locked in for company. She only takes me out when she can go too and watch me.

BOY: There ought to be a way to fool her—to take away her magic power . . .

CAT: Yes. If she lost her power I'd be a little girl again. (*Almost crying*) Oh, how I wish I were a little girl! I'd just love taking hot baths and brushing my teeth . . .

BOY: I have it! I have a plan! (*Footsteps are heard outside*)

CAT: Tell it to me, quick. Here comes the witch. (BOY *whispers and gestures, first toward oven then toward rain barrel.*)

CAT: It sounds good. Here's hoping it works. (*She and the* BOY *run to oven.* CAT *locks it, takes out key; gives it to* BOY. *He runs to rain barrel and drops key in. They have both withdrawn hastily to middle of room when* WITCH *enters.*)

WITCH (*Speaking to* CAT, *but looking at* BOY): Well, well, well. You seem to have company, Midnight.

CAT (*Sulkily*): I guess you knew it.

BOY (*Politely*): How do you do, Mrs. Witch?

WITCH (*Surprised*): Got some manners, haven't you? That's more than I can say for *most* boys. (*Turns to* CAT.) He ought to make real *sweet* gingerbread, eh, Midnight?

CAT: He might. If there were an oven to bake him in.

WITCH (*Pointing to oven*): What do you call that?

CAT: I—I mean if you could open it.

WITCH: Open it? Of course I can open it. (*Runs to do so and discovers key is missing.*) Oh, ho! So that's it! Someone's been hiding my key . . .

CAT: Well, you see, I knew you'd want to use the oven. But the key was pretty sticky . . . and needed washing . . . and . . . and . . .

WITCH (*Crossly*): And so you tried to wash it, eh? Silly Cat! What makes you want things so clean? I suppose you dropped it in the rain barrel . . . (CAT *and* BOY *say nothing, but hang heads guiltily. On the sly, however, they wink at each other.* WITCH *goes to rain barrel.*) You needn't bother to answer. I can see for myself. (*Leans over barrel, hands locked behind her, and peers in. Quickly the* BOY *and* CAT *are upon her.* CAT *grabs her hands and holds them tight.* BOY *begins to wash her face with a clean handkerchief from his pocket.*)

WITCH (*Blubbering and spluttering*): Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow! HELP! HELP! HELP!

BOY (*Soothingly*): There, there! It's only soap and water. It won't hurt you a bit.

WITCH: Let me go. LET ME GO! Water's to drink, not to wash in. Help me, Midnight. Help me. Think of all I've done for you. You know I hate water. Help me! (*She faints, draping herself limply over rain barrel.*)

CAT: Well, I declare! She's fainted.

BOY: Help me get her over to that chair. We'll fix up her hair, too. (*They put* WITCH *in chair at front of stage, a towel over her face. Her head lolls back.* CAT *runs and gets two combs, giving one to the* BOY. *They stand on either side of* WITCH *and comb her hair, each making a long slick braid.*)

CAT (*Nervously, as she braids*): I hope it works, I hope it works, I hope, hope, hope it works. (*Repeats in a mumble.*)

BOY(*In sing song*): It's got to work, it's got to work. It's got to, got to, got to work. (*Repeats in a chant.* WITCH *stirs.*)

BOY: There! We're done. Bring a mirror quick. She's coming to.

CAT (*Bringing mirror*): Take off the towel. (WITCH *opens her eyes. They hold the mirror up before her. She looks pretty and young.*)

WITCH: What's this? Who is it? Who's that pretty girl?

CAT *and* BOY: That's *you.*

WITCH (*Pathetically*): You're making fun of me. I wish—I wish I did look like that . . .

CAT *and* BOY: You *do.* This is just a mirror, see?

WITCH (*Wide-eyed*): Why so it is! That's *my* face. Why! I *am* pretty . . . and young . . . and . . . and . . .

CAT (*Emphatically*): CLEAN.

BOY: You've been pretty and young all the time, only you couldn't see your face through the dirt.

WITCH: HOW WONDERFUL! I'm not a witch any more. (*She throws her arms around* CAT.) And you're not going to be a cat any more. Here, let me take off your cat skin. (*She unbuttons the costume and takes off the mask. A little girl steps out of the cast-off clothes.*)

LITTLE GIRL: Oh, thank you! Thank you, witch!

WITCH: Thank *you!* And the boy, too. You are my best friends. (*She grabs them by the hands and they all dance around in a circle as the* WITCH *says in singsong rhythm.*)

Witchery, sorcery, magic and mumbo
I am all through with their gibber and jumbo.
Hocus and pocus and pitter and patter!
What are they good for? What do they matter?
Murmur and mumble and singing of spells
They're nothing at all but mere bagatelles!

THE END

The Morning Maker

Adapted from a Mexican folk tale

by Camilla Campbell

Characters

CHOLU, *the Indian guide*
THE SPANIARD
THE CHIEFTAIN
EL GALLO, *the Cock*
YOUNG INDIANS

SCENE 1

TIME: *Evening in the time of our great-grandfathers.*

SETTING: *The road to a Mexican Indian village.*

AT RISE: CHOLU *and the* SPANIARD *enter right. The* SPANIARD *walks wearily, leaning on* CHOLU.

CHOLU: Come. We are almost there. (*Points out left*) See, here is my chieftain to find what stranger approaches our village!

SPANIARD: You've been very kind. (*They stop. Enter left the* CHIEFTAIN *followed by several young* INDIANS.)

CHOLU: Oh, Chieftain, this man is a Spaniard, one who came in the great white ships from the land of the sunrise in the time of our fathers. He was lost and I found him. He is weary.

CHIEFTAIN: Then we must take him to our village and give him rest. But tell me, Spaniard, if you were lost, for what did you search?

SPANIARD: I was told there was silver in these mountains. For that I searched. (*The* INDIANS *exchange uneasy glances, but remain silent.*) Perhaps you could show me the way?

CHIEFTAIN: No. We shall not talk of silver. But you shall have food and a mat to sleep on. Tomorrow Cholu will show you the way back whence you came.

SPANIARD (*Sighing*): Yes, tonight food and sleep are better than silver.

CHIEFTAIN: Come. (*Exit left* CHIEFTAIN *and* SPANIARD *followed by the others. The stage darkens and remains dark long enough to indicate the passage of a night. A dim light reveals shadowy figures entering from left. They stamp their feet softly to a chant which begins slow and increases as they bow and beckon to the East, at right.*)

INDIANS: Oh, Sun, we invite you
Show us your face!
Oh, Sun, come from hiding,
Scatter the dark.
Come—come—come!

SPANIARD (*Entering from left*): What has occurred? Are enemies upon us? What takes place?

CHIEFTAIN: Oh, no, Spaniard. Our young men are bringing up the Sun.

SPANIARD: Bringing up the Sun?

CHIEFTAIN: Every morning we must do this or the Sun will not show himself to us. Who knows what might happen then! Every little morning of the world our young men must coax the Sun with their singing. Do you not do this in your village?

SPANIARD: Oh, no. Our young men sleep till the Sun is up. We have a little animal that brings up the Sun for us. He does it much better. We don't have to trouble ourselves at all. (*A shaft of light falls upon the group from the right. The* INDIANS *shout and then crowd around the* SPANIARD *and the* CHIEFTAIN.)

CHIEFTAIN: Behold, they have brought the Sun! It takes our strongest and bravest men. But you have a little animal, you say? What sort of little animal?

SPANIARD: We call him *El Gallo*, the Cock. Every little morning of the world *El Gallo* brings up the Sun for us. (*The* INDIANS *talk among themselves, then to the* CHIEFTAIN.)

CHIEFTAIN: Could we get *El Gallo* to come to our village? It would be worth much to us not to have to coax the Sun up every day.

SPANIARD: Perhaps I can find *El Gallo* for you. If I do, then we might talk of silver?

CHIEFTAIN: It is possible. Cholu will guide you. When do you return?

SPANIARD: If I am successful, I will be here again in three days.

CURTAIN

* * *

SCENE 2

SETTING: *The same.*

AT RISE: *The* SPANIARD *and* CHOLU *enter from right, followed by* EL GALLO. CHOLU *lifts an arm toward left entrance, and the* CHIEFTAIN *and his* INDIANS *come on stage from left.*

CHIEFTAIN: Welcome, Spaniard. It is good you are back. And you have brought *El Gallo*?

SPANIARD: This is *El Gallo*. He will be your morning maker. Every little morning of the world he will make the Sun appear. Now—uh—you will guide me to the silver? (*The young* INDIANS *stir uneasily.*)

CHIEFTAIN: Tomorrow, my friend. First we must see with our own eyes if *El Gallo* is a true morning maker.

SPANIARD: Oh, he is. (*They all move toward left exit.*) You can be sure of it.

CHIEFTAIN: In the morning. . . . (*The stage again darkens to indicate the passage of a night. After a pause a dim light shows* *again the shadowy figures of the young* INDIANS *coming on stage. The* SPANIARD *and* EL GALLO *are far right.)*

SPANIARD (*Looking at the sky*): In a few moments, just a few moments. (*All silently watch* EL GALLO. *He flaps his wings and crows. The* INDIANS *move uneasily.* EL GALLO *flaps and crows several times. Then the shaft of light appears from the right. The* INDIANS *shout with joy and pet* EL GALLO.)

CHIEFTAIN (*Taking the* SPANIARD *by arm*): Come now. The silver!

THE END

The Wind Wand

by Alice Dennis

Characters

MARTHA, *a child of ten*
JON, *her brother who is eight*
VIOLET }
WHIST } *three elves*
GREENY }

TIME: *A warm spring afternoon.*
SETTING: *A garden.*
AT RISE: MARTHA *and* JON *enter the garden, each with a book under an arm.*

MARTHA: Let's sit here, Jon, on the garden bench. We are lucky that Mother said we could do our homework in the garden.

JON: This is a treat, Martha. (*They settle down on the bench.* JON *opens his book almost immediately.* MARTHA *is slower, gazing around.*) We'd better get to work and finish our lessons or Mother won't let us study here again. She said that, you know.

MARTHA: Oh—it's so lovely here. I wish school was over so we could be in the garden every minute. (*She motions about her.*) See—how green the bushes are, and all of those butterflies around the flowers. (*She makes a gesture through the air and says excitedly to the boy who is trying to find a page in his book*) Oh, Jon, I have caught a cherry blossom that was floating in the air. It was just like a fairy! (*While she has been talking, from the wings back of the two children tiptoe three elves, one dressed in violet, one* *in grey and silver, one in bright green. Their suits are cut short and they wear peaked hats. As she catches the cherry blossom and holds it in her hand, the three elves express horror. When she finishes speaking, the one in grey and silver bounds around in front of the children, the other two elves following more timidly.)*

WHIST: But it was—and now you've spoiled it! (*The children gasp with surprise at the array of elfin splendor.* MARTHA *looks frightened,* JON *amazed.*)

MARTHA: What—what do you mean?

WHIST (*Angrily*): It was a fairy—(*He gestures toward her hand still clenched around the cherry blossom.*) Now you've spoiled her ride. (*He strides to her hand, opens her fist, and gestures to the others.*) See—what did I tell you. This mortal has frightened away a fairy and crushed a cherry blossom.

VIOLET (*Timidly*): You're being rude, Whist.

GREENY: Yes, that's right. And we've no business with mortals any more. Come on, Whist, let's go back to the hollyhock tree. (*The three elves start to turn away, but* MARTHA *jumps to her feet and grasps* WHIST *by the arm.*)

MARTHA: No, no. Don't go away. Who are you? Tell me! Do you live near us? Are you going to our school? (JON *has remained seated on the bench, watching the show. Now he tries to get* MARTHA'S *attention.*)

JON (*Softly*): Martha! Say, Martha! (MARTHA *ignores her brother.*)

MARTHA (*Excitedly*): Who are you? What are you doing in the garden?

WHIST (*Indignantly, shaking off her grasp and rubbing his arm*): We live here, that's what. This is our home.

VIOLET: We're elves. You're mortals.

JON: There aren't any elves any more. They were in fairy tales. Come back, Martha. Come back here and do your lessons. We came out here to work.

WHIST (*Angrily*): I won't stand here and be insulted any more. (VIOLET *has begun to cry and* GREENY *is comforting her.*) You've hurt Violet's feelings and you've insulted Greeny and me. I have never yet seen a mortal who could measure up to an elf. There's always trouble where mortals are.

MARTHA (*Pleading*): Please, elves, please. Don't mind my brother. I believe in you, really I do. All my life I've wanted to see you but you always seemed so far away in books. (*She crosses to* VIOLET *and puts her arms around her.*) I believe in you. Really. And my brother will, too, if you will be patient with him. What is your name?

VIOLET (*Through her tears*): I'm Violet.

GREENY (*Cheerfully*): I'm Greeny.

WHIST (*Taking a stance—almost Napoleonic*): And I am Whist! (*He whirls gaily in a strange little dance of his own.*)

GREENY: He lives in the home of the wind. We are earth elves.

MARTHA: Oh—why haven't we seen you before?

VIOLET: We were afraid of you.

WHIST (*Stopping his dervish dance and springing into their midst*): We were not afraid! Violet was scared, maybe, but Greeny and I weren't. You were so busy with those airplanes and the stupid dolls that you didn't see us.

MARTHA: Where do you live?

GREENY (*Seizing* MARTHA'S *hand and leading her back toward the rear of the stage, the others following,* WHIST *leaping gaily,* VIOLET *clutching his coattails.* JON, *who has been watching the scene intently, picks up his book with a shrug and then puts it down and peers over his shoulder. Finally, unable to resist the temptation, he puts the book on the bench and tags slowly behind the others who have paused at the rear of the stage.*) We live here—back away from the paths of mortals. Whoever would meet us must seek us out.

MARTHA (*Clapping her hands as she peers right—into the wings*): What a cozy little house, all purple! With acorn dishes and a big leaf umbrella on the terrace!

VIOLET (*Timidly*): It's not purple, it's violet.

MARTHA: I'm sorry. Just like your name. Do all of you live there?

GREENY: Oh, no. That's Violet's house. She lives among the stems of the violet plants and I live in the grass. See—(*She turns* MARTHA *around and they all look into the left wing.*) I live over there. . . .

MARTHA: Oh—a green house, and there's Mother's thimble on the porch, filled with crumbs. (*She starts to run into the stage wings but the three elves immediately seize upon her and hold her back.*)

ELVES: No, no. You cannot go there. You wouldn't fit in our world.

MARTHA (*Hurt and puzzled*): But why? Why? It's so pretty there.

WHIST: We can come to you if you wish it, but you can never come to us. That is the law. No mortal seems to care nowadays, but long ago mortals used to look for us everywhere.

MARTHA: How very sad. Why do mortals neglect you so?

WHIST (*Vehemently*): I say it's the airplane. Mortals can fly now so they have no more use for elves.

GREENY: I think it's the war. Mortals are too busy fighting.

VIOLET (*Timidly and quietly*): I think it's because they have forgotten about us.

WHIST: Maybe so, Violet. Now, Greeny, go get the girl-child's thimble.

GREENY: I didn't steal it. I found it on the garden path and it was just what I needed to keep crumbs in.

WHIST (*Sneering at* GREENY): She saves crumbs for the ants.

GREENY (*Sneering back at* WHIST): He rides grasshoppers instead of flying, lazy thing.

WHIST: Get the mortal's thimble and stop quarreling with me.

MARTHA: My name is Martha. Call me that. (*As she speaks,* GREENY *whirls out of sight into the wings at left.*) My brother Jon is here. (*She looks around and there is* JON *away from their circle watching them.* MARTHA *points toward him.*) See, there is my brother Jon!

WHIST (*To* JON): Stay away from us, brother Jon. I don't like you.

VIOLET: Whist! How can you be so unkind? (JON *stands disconsolately aside, not knowing quite what to do. He shuffles his feet uncertainly.* GREENY *slips onto the stage again and hands* MARTHA *the thimble.*)

GREENY: There you are! Thank you for the thimble. I didn't mean to keep it so long.

VIOLET: Whist said mean words to the mortal boy, Greeny. I don't think it's fair to be mean, do you?

WHIST: He said he didn't believe in us. Didn't you, boy?

JON: I—I wasn't sure then. (WHIST *whirls across the stage to* JON *and dances about him.*)

WHIST: What do you think now, boy? What do you say now?

JON (*Eagerly*): I do believe in you now. Really I do, Whist. I hadn't seen you before. Martha had—in fairy tale books.

MARTHA (*Pityingly*): Jon was brought up on modern nursery books with problems in them to develop his brain. He never read fairy tales. He had never seen you before.

WHIST: Then you're forgiven, Jon. But never forget us.

JON: Oh no, no. But where do you live, Whist?

WHIST (*Springing into the air in a gay leap*): I live in the home of the wind. It's high in the sky, at the top of the world, and every morning I slide to earth on a sunbeam.

JON: What do you do on rainy days?

WHIST: Why—I come down in a raindrop. It's just like a parachute—but more fun. (*A voice in the distance is heard calling: "Jon, Martha. . . . Come in now. Bring your homework with you. Jon! Martha! Do you hear me?"*)

JON: Say something, Martha. It's Mother. Answer her.

VOICE: Jon. Martha. Come in now.

MARTHA: Yes, yes, Mother. We're coming! We're coming!

JON: Oh dear, none of our homework is done and when she finds out we haven't done it, she won't let us come here again until school is over and that won't be for a month.

MARTHA: Oh dear. This is very bad.

ELVES: We're sorry to have bothered you and caused you trouble.

GREENY: Oh, Whist, couldn't you use the wind wand just this once, to help our mortal friends?

VIOLET: Yes, please, Whist, just this once. Help our friends.

MARTHA: We must go. Come on, Jon.

WHIST (*Whirling*): Yes, I will use it. I haven't used it in a long time!

JON: What is that?

WHIST: Where is your homework?

JON: On the bench. (*He points to the chairs. The entire group moves over to the bench.*)

WHIST: What was your work, Martha?

MARTHA (*Picking up a book and paper*): I was to have done these arithmetic problems.

WHIST: What was your homework, Jon?

JON (*Picking up a book*): I was to know how to spell this column of words.

WHIST (*Whirling three times, pulling a silver stick from his pocket and tapping the heads of the children and the books as he speaks*): Deep cave of the winds, high halls of the windy night! Cold breezes, hot hurricanes, soft sultry winds of the seas I've never seen. Down this magic wand bring the power of your might! Grant me my wish, an elfin wind sprite! (*There is a faint roll of drums in the distance.*) The wish is granted. Your homework is done!

MARTHA (*Awed*): My paper is filled with figures and the problems are right!

JON: I can spell! I can spell all the words! P-e-o-p-l-e. People. C-l-o-t-h-

MARTHA (*Interrupting him*): Oh—Whist, how can we ever thank you?

WHIST (*Proudly*): It was nothing. (*He does a little dance.*)

VIOLET: Come to see us again, Martha and Jon. (*The voice in the distance is calling the children again.*)

GREENY: Come to see us often in the garden. Sometimes we are lonely for mortals, but we have been too proud to visit them when they ignored us so.

WHIST: Come to see us, and I will teach you to dance! (*The children move off toward the front wings.*)

MARTHA: We will come again—very soon!

JON: Both of us!

THE END

Little Red Riding Hood

by Ruth Vickery Holmes

Characters

WOODCUTTER
HIS WIFE
LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD
WOLF
GRANDMA

SCENE 1

SETTING: *In front of the* WOODCUTTER'S *cottage.*

AT RISE: WOODCUTTER *opens door, and comes a few paces forward, looks at the sky, then calls back.*

WOODCUTTER: Yes, my dear, the sky is clear.

WIFE (*Enters from door, and stands, looking at the sky*): Yes, and there's no wind. If there were any chance that a storm would blow up, I would not let the child go all alone.

WOODCUTTER (*Nods*): No. It wouldn't be safe. But today's so fine that she can see the path even where the woods are darkest.

WIFE (*Turning, and putting her hand on* WOODCUTTER'S *shoulder*): That dense, lonely part of the woods is what I dread the most. But you'll be somewhere near there, cutting trees.

WOODCUTTER (*Going toward left first*): Yes—thereabouts. (*Turns back.*) And Grandma wasn't feeling well yesterday. It will cheer her up to have company. Indeed, she may need help.

WIFE (*Nods*): Then, when I finish the baking, I'll go myself. And why don't you go, too, when your work is done?

WOODCUTTER (*Smiles*): Yes, the whole family. We'll all go to see

Grandma. But let the child go soon. She can spend the day there, then come home with us.

WIFE (*Turning to go into house*): Then I'll get the basket ready. (*Calls*) Red Riding Hood.

RED RIDING HOOD (*Entering from house without her cloak*): Yes, Mother.

WIFE (*Smiling*): We're going to let you go to Grandma's all alone.

RED RIDING HOOD (*Clapping her hands*): All by myself.

WIFE (*Nods*): To spend the day, and keep her company. I'll pack some food for you to take to her. (*Goes into house.*)

RED RIDING HOOD (*Running to flower bed at right*): And I'll get some flowers for Grandma.

WOODCUTTER (*Going near* RED RIDING HOOD): Be careful, child. Be sure to follow the path, and never leave it.

RED RIDING HOOD: Yes, Father, I promise—I'll remember.

WOODCUTTER: I'm going now to fell some trees. (*Points left.*) I'll not be far away. And wait at Grandma's until we come for you. (*On way out right*) Good-bye, my dear.

RED RIDING HOOD (*Calling*): Good-bye, Father. (*Turns and goes to meet her mother, who comes out of house with a basket, covered with a napkin, and carrying red cape.*) See, Mother, all these flowers to lay on top. (*Puts flowers upon napkin.*)

WIFE (*Smiling*): Yes, flowers on top. (*Points to basket.*) The custard is here. And the pats of butter. You will be careful, won't you, dear? (*Puts basket on* RED RIDING HOOD'S *arm.*)

RED RIDING HOOD (*Nods vigorously*): Oh, yes, Mother.

WIFE (*Anxiously*): I wish I could go with you. But tell Grandma that I'll be there later. And now your cloak (*Fastens it around* RED RIDING HOOD.) How good it was of Grandma to make it for you.

RED RIDING HOOD (*Nods*): And now I can go and be a help to Grandma. If she needs anything, then I'll be there.

WIFE (*Smiling*): Yes, dear. I know you'll do your very best. (*Walking with* RED RIDING HOOD *to right.*) Now, hurry along.

Red Riding Hood: Good-bye, Mother.

Wife: Good-bye, Little Red Riding Hood.

CURTAIN

* * *

Scene 2

Setting: *In the woods.*

At Rise: **Wolf** *enters from right, goes to center, looks out left, astonished, and hides in front of tree at left.* **Red Riding Hood** *enters from left, pauses left of center, and looks around.*

Wolf (*Springing forward to right of center, turns to face her*): Good day, little girl.

Red Riding Hood (*Dismayed*): Oh! A wolf. I didn't see you coming. I didn't think I'd meet a wolf.

Wolf (*Licking his chops*): And I didn't think I'd meet a little girl. So young—Umm—so tender—I dare say *very* tender. And all alone.

Red Riding Hood (*Drawing back*): But I'm not all alone. That is, my father's somewhere near.

Wolf (*Quickly moving toward right*): Oh, your father's somewhere near. That makes a difference. Where is your father?

Red Riding Hood (*Pointing rear*): Oh, over there, not far away. He's cutting trees.

Wolf (*Thoughtfully*): Then I suppose he has an axe?

Red Riding Hood (*Laughing*): Of course he has an axe. A woodcutter always has an axe. I'll call him. Then you'll see.

Wolf (*Hastily*): No, don't do that. I think I'd best be going on my way.

Red Riding Hood (*Nods*): And I must hurry, too. You see I'm going to Grandma's to surprise her and (*Points to basket*) take her all these things. Custard, and pats of butter, and . . .

Wolf (*Sniffing basket*): Um—food—any sort of food. Tender, or tough. How I should like some! Where, just exactly, does your Grandma live?

RED RIDING HOOD (*Pointing right*): Beyond the woods, where the path crosses the bridge. The first house is Grandma's. She's not well at all. I'm going to keep her company.

WOLF (*Nods*): The first house beyond the bridge. I know a way to get there that's much quicker than the path. A short cut through the woods. (*Turns toward right.*) Come. Follow me; I'll show you.

RED RIDING HOOD (*Follows a few paces, then stops*): Oh, no, Wolf, I can't. My father said to follow the path, never to leave it. I promised to obey.

WOLF (*Fawning and pleading*): But there are such lovely flowers along the short cut.

RED RIDING HOOD (*Holding up the basket*): But, Wolf, I don't need any more flowers. Didn't you notice these? Still, if you're sure the way you know is shorter—

WOLF (*Leaping about in delight*): Ha, ha, much shorter. (*Licks his lips.*) Ah. Now, soon, Umm—

RED RIDING HOOD (*Seriously*): Then I will call my father, and ask him if he minds.

WOLF (*Quickly*): No, don't call your father. No, on no account. I would not have your father disturbed for anything. I'll leave you now. (*Goes toward right, then turns back.*) But I've just thought of something. You say your Grandma is not well. Then, how will she unfasten the door? How will she let you in?

RED RIDING HOOD (*Laughing*): Oh, Wolf, you are so funny. Don't you know? The bobbin hangs outside. I'll knock. Then Grandma will say, "Who's there?" Then I'll say, "Your granddaughter, Little Red Riding Hood." Then Grandma will call out, "Just pull the bobbin, and the latch will go up." It will be so easy.

WOLF (*Licking his lips again*): Yes, yes, indeed, so easy. (*Then thoughtfully*) So very easy.

RED RIDING HOOD (*Going out left*): Good-bye, then, Wolf.

WOLF (*Calling after her*): Good-bye, Red Riding Hood. (*Then, licking his lips, he says with meaning*) Good-bye, for now. (*Bounds out left.*)

CURTAIN

* * *

SCENE 3

SETTING: *Inside* GRANDMA'S *cottage.*

AT RISE: GRANDMA, *with frilled nightcap, and a warm shawl over her shoulders, is propped up against the bed pillows. A patchwork quilt covers the bedclothes.* GRANDMA *sighs, reaches for the book, looks at it, and sighs again.* WOLF *looks in through the window, then his paw slips and he makes a scratching sound against the glass and disappears.* GRANDMA, *startled, leans out of bed, peering everywhere. Then she puts back the book, and takes up her knitting.* WOLF *again looks through the window, and again makes a sound on the window pane.* GRANDMA *puts down her knitting, looks all around, sighs, picks up the clock, looks at it, sighs, gives it a shake, and puts it down. Five firm knocks are heard on the door.*

GRANDMA (*With her hand to her ear*): Who's there?

WOLF'S VOICE (*From outside door*): Your granddaughter, Little Red Riding Hood.

GRANDMA (*Delighted*): Just pull the bobbin, and the latch will go up. Come in, dear child—

WOLF (*Entering, but standing out of* GRANDMA'S *sight*): I've come to keep you company.

GRANDMA (*Nodding*): How very nice, my dear. But your voice. Are you quite yourself today? Are you feeling all right?

WOLF (*Drawing nearer*): I'm feeling very *hungry*. I need some food.

GRANDMA (*Smiling*): Why, so do I, my child. Yes, so do I. Perhaps you'll fix the tray. Let's both have tea.

Wolf (*Now crouching close to bed, still unseen by* Grandma, *laughs rudely*): Tea—Ha-ha-ha—*tea*. What I'd rather have is—(*Leaps at* Grandma, *and roars*) *Meat!*

Grandma (*Calling*): Help—help!

QUICK CURTAIN

* * *

Scene 4

Setting: *The same as Scene 3.*

At Rise: Wolf *is in the bed, wearing* Grandma's *nightcap and shawl. He smiles, licks his lips, and rubs his stomach, gloating. Knocking is heard on door.*

Wolf (*Leaning forward eagerly*): Who's there?

Red Riding Hood (*Off*): Your granddaughter, Little Red Riding Hood.

Wolf: Just pull the bobbin, and the latch will go up. Come in, dear child.

Red Riding Hood (*Entering, and standing beside the door*): I've come to keep you company.

Wolf: How very nice, my dear.

Red Riding Hood (*Surprised*): Oh, Grandma. Your voice. How sore your throat must be. Here is some custard for you, and some pats of butter from Mother. And here are some flowers from me.

Wolf: Just put them down; then come here. Come close to me.

Red Riding Hood (*Puts her basket upon the table at right, then turns toward the bed. As she sees the* Wolf, *she stops short, and cries out*): Why, Grandma, what big ears you have.

Wolf: The better to hear you with, my child.

Red Riding Hood (*Taking another step, stops*): And, Grandma, what great eyes you have.

WOLF (*Smiling and showing his teeth*): The better to see you with, my child.

RED RIDING HOOD (*Going one step nearer*): And, Grandma, what sharp teeth you have.

WOLF (*Springing out of bed*): The better to eat you with, my child.

RED RIDING HOOD (*Rushing to door*): Help! Help! (WOLF *in pursuit.*)

WOODCUTTER (*Flinging the door wide, strides in, followed by* WIFE, *while* RED RIDING HOOD *crouches down beneath the window*): My child, what is it? (*Sees* WOLF.) Ah! (*Chases the* WOLF *with lifted axe. The* WOLF *dodges about the room, then flies out through the door, with* WOODCUTTER *in pursuit.*)

WIFE (*Putting her arms around* RED RIDING HOOD): There, there, my child. Don't be afraid. Your father will see to the wolf.

RED RIDING HOOD (*Sobbing*): Oh, Mother, the wolf was there (*Points*), in Grandma's bed, in Grandma's nightclothes.

MOTHER (*Running to bed*): Oh, poor Grandma. Poor, poor Grandma.

WOODCUTTER (*Entering, without his axe*): The wolf will never make trouble again, no, never again.

RED RIDING HOOD (*Pointing to bed*): But Grandma; oh, poor Grandma.

WOODCUTTER (*Glancing at the empty bed, dismayed*): What, did the wolf dare make away with Grandma? I'll look down his wicked throat, and see. (*Goes out.*)

MOTHER (*Comforting* RED RIDING HOOD): Hush, my dear. I'm sure your father can manage everything. (WOODCUTTER *enters, leading* GRANDMA.) See, here's Grandma now.

RED RIDING HOOD (*Running and hugging* GRANDMA): Are you all right, dear Grandma?

GRANDMA (*Remarkably composed*): Yes, quite all right. Thank you, my dear. Yes, quite all right. But very glad your father came so soon.

RED RIDING HOOD (*More happily*): But, Grandma, don't you feel frightened at all?

GRANDMA (*Nods*): A few bad moments there were, my child. But now they're over.

WIFE (*Anxiously*): Isn't there's something we can do for you, Grandma?

WOODCUTTER (*Helping* GRANDMA *to her bed*): Isn't there something?

RED RIDING HOOD (*Eagerly*): Some way to help you?

GRANDMA (*Leaning back upon her pillows*): Yes, perhaps you'll fix the tray. Let's all have tea.

THE END

Little Snow White

by Walter King

Characters

SNOW WHITE	SEVEN DWARFS
PEDLAR WOMAN	THE PRINCE

SETTING: *The home of the Dwarfs.*

AT RISE: SNOW WHITE *is bringing on some soup bowls and setting the table in preparation for the* DWARFS' *supper. While doing this she hums or sings quietly, placing the dishes with great care. Suddenly, a strange voice is heard outside and* SNOW WHITE *stops to listen.*

PEDLAR (*Shouting*): Fine goods for sale! Fine goods for sale! All fit for a princess! Fine goods here!

SNOW WHITE: Oh! a pedlar! It is such a long time since anyone came selling in the woods. (*Goes to door*)

PEDLAR (*At door*): May I come in? I have some real fine goods to show you today.

SNOW WHITE: Oh, no! I'm very sorry really, but I can't let you in. I'd love to see what you have though.

PEDLAR (*Pushing her way past* SNOW WHITE—*she has a tray full of goods, held horizontal by straps over her shoulders*): I'm sure you would. (*Looks around*) All alone, eh?

SNOW WHITE: Yes. But the seven dwarfs will be back soon. See. (*Points to table*) I was just setting the supper dishes.

PEDLAR (*Appearing interested*): Really? Seven dwarfs?

SNOW WHITE (*Nodding her head timidly*): Uh—huh! They work in the mines. But they will be very angry if they come home and find anyone here. They told me to let no one in.

PEDLAR (*Sits on chair, by table*): That's quite all right, my dear. They wouldn't want you to miss this chance. Besides, it won't take a minute. I'll be a long way from here before they ever get back. See, a beautiful gold ring. (*Holds it up admiringly*) Do you know my dear that the girl who wears this ring is sure to be married to a prince?

SNOW WHITE (*Excitedly*): To a prince! How much do you want for it?

PEDLAR: Didn't you say the dwarfs worked in the mines?

SNOW WHITE: Yes, they do.

PEDLAR: Then they will have lots of money. So don't worry now about the price, my dear. The dwarfs can pay for it any time.

SNOW WHITE (*Taking the ring and trying it on*): Oh! isn't it beautiful.

PEDLAR: Ah, but you haven't seen this? (*Holds up a comb*) Now there is a real comb. Do you know that the girl who wears this comb in her hair will never grow old. She will always look as pretty as when the prince marries her.

SNOW WHITE: May I have that, too?

PEDLAR (*Putting it in her hair*): Certainly. Look how well it suits you my dear. And now there is just one other thing I can spare today. And that is this great beautiful apple. Do you know my dear, if you take even one bite of this you will live to be over a hundred years old.

SNOW WHITE: But, I dare not eat it. The dwarfs told me never to eat anything a stranger gave me.

PEDLAR: Nonsense. What are you afraid of? Bring me a knife and I will show you how delicious it is.

SNOW WHITE (*Picking up a knife from the table*): Here.

PEDLAR (*Cutting apple*): See, I will cut it in two. There! Now you can eat that half and I will eat this. Then we'll both live to be over a hundred, eh! (*Laughs*)

SNOW WHITE (*As soon as she has taken a bite*): Oh! (*She puts her hand on her forehead and sinks down on the floor first to a sitting position and then over on her back with her face turned upstage.*)

PEDLAR (*Gets up and chuckles to herself*): It is all over with you now. You have eaten the poisoned half of the apple. No more will my mirror taunt me with the words:

Thou wert the fairest, lady Queen,
Snow White is fairest now, I ween.

Ha! ha! And you thought I was an old pedlar, eh? Ha! ha! That's rich, that is. Ha! ha! ha. . . . (*Her laughing is interrupted with the sound of footsteps outside the door, right.*) My goodness! (*Horrified*) The seven dwarfs! If I don't get out of here they'll skin me alive. (*Sneaks out left as quickly and as quietly as she can, leaving the door open. First two* DWARFS *enter slowly, looking puzzled. They cannot see* SNOW WHITE *because of the table.*)

1ST DWARF (*To* SECOND): Not here!

2ND DWARF (*To* THIRD, *outside*): Not here! (*We hear five more "not here's" each one fainter than the one preceding.*)

1ST DWARF: Strange!

2ND DWARF: Very strange! She always came to meet us. (*Remaining five* DWARFS *enter now all looking frightened . . . they remain huddled together just inside the room.*)

1ST DWARF (*Advancing a little, carefully*): Look! the front door is open!

2ND DWARF: So it is!

3RD DWARF (*Almost whispering*): She's gone!

4TH DWARF: She's left us!

5TH DWARF: What a pity!

6TH DWARF: Too bad!

7TH DWARF (*Pulling a sad face*): Most regrettable! (*The 1st* DWARF *puts his lantern down and the others follow suit in regular order. Then 1st* DWARF *advances to left front cautiously to peer out of door. He is followed by the 2nd* DWARF *who trails him like a* *shadow and imitates his every action. In the meantime the 7th* Dwarf *is circling to right of the table. He catches sight of* Snow White *on the floor just as 1st* Dwarf *and 2nd* Dwarf *are peering out of the front door.*) Picks and shovels! Look here! (*Points to* Snow White. *1st and 2nd* Dwarfs *jump, indicating fright. All seven then crowd around* Snow White, *kneeling down.*) She must have fainted.

1st Dwarf: Fainted!

2nd Dwarf: Fainted?

6th Dwarf: But why?

4th Dwarf: Yes, why?

3rd Dwarf (*Putting his ear to her heart*): She's dead!

All: Dead?

3rd Dwarf: Dead as a dead weasel.

1st Dwarf: Look, there's a comb in her hair! (*Takes it out carefully and passes it down the line. Each* Dwarf *as he examines the comb mutters, "A comb."*)

5th Dwarf: Someone's been!

6th Dwarf: True. Someone's been!

2nd Dwarf: But who?

1st Dwarf: Ah, who?

2nd Dwarf: What's this? A ring on her finger. (*Takes it off then lets her arm fall, limp.*)

4th Dwarf: Gold?

2nd Dwarf: Cheap brass. (*Passes it on down the line. Each* Dwarf *as he examines it mutters, "A cheap brass ring."*)

7th Dwarf: Our little ray of sunshine has been poisoned.

6th Dwarf: I know. It must have been the bad queen.

All: What queen?

6th Dwarf: Snow White's stepmother. A hunter told me about her. She was jealous of Snow White's beauty.

1st Dwarf: What a pity!

2nd Dwarf: What shall we do?

4th Dwarf: We must bury her in the woods.

5TH DWARF: But wait. We cannot lose her so soon. She must stay here for three days.

6TH DWARF: No, we cannot bury her in the black ground. She is too pretty.

7TH DWARF: I have it! Let's make a glass case and put her in that. Then we will be able to see her.

3RD DWARF: A good idea. But first we must get some flowers for her.

2ND DWARF: Snow White roses!

1ST DWARF: Any kind, foolish. She loved all the flowers. (*Enter the* PRINCE. *He comes striding boldly through the open door but stops short upon seeing the* DWARFS *and doffs his hat, bowing politely.*)

PRINCE: Oh, I beg your pardon. I got lost in the woods. Then I saw your open door and I thought you might . . . (*Sees* SNOW WHITE) Why, what is this?

1ST DWARF: Ask us what it was!

2ND DWARF (*Almost in tears*): Our Snow White, our dear Snow White, has been poisoned. (*The* PRINCE *kneels on one knee by* SNOW WHITE'S *head facing audience and as he does so the* DWARFS *rise to their feet one at a time starting with 1st* DWARF.)

PRINCE: Beautiful! Beautiful! Like a princess! (*To the* DWARFS) She must have eaten something.

1ST DWARF: She must!

2ND DWARF: She certainly must.

3RD DWARF: When we were out.

4TH DWARF: Digging.

5TH DWARF: At the mines.

6TH DWARF: We found a comb in her hair. (*Gets it from 7th* DWARF *and passes it along the line to the* PRINCE. *As each* DWARF *hands the comb to the next, he says "The comb."*)

7TH DWARF: And a cheap brass ring on her finger. (*Passes it along the line to the* PRINCE. *As each* DWARF *hands the ring to the next he says, "A cheap brass ring."*)

PRINCE (*Examines each article, the* DWARFS *watching anxiously*): These cheap things were given to gain her confidence. But she has eaten something. Look! (*Points to* SNOW WHITE's *face*) She has something in her mouth yet. (*Carefully pulls out piece of an apple.*) And here it is! A poisoned apple! (SNOW WHITE *moves and begins to sit up.*) See! She is coming to.

1ST DWARF (*Almost in a whisper*): So she is!

2ND DWARF: You're right, she is.

3RD DWARF: Oh, joy!

4TH DWARF: Great!

5TH DWARF: Beautiful!

SNOW WHITE (*Sitting up and opening her eyes*): Where am I?

PRINCE: Here, quite safe.

SNOW WHITE (*Looks around, sees* DWARFS *who smile*): Oh yes, I remember now. It was the old pedlar woman who did it. She gave me a poisoned apple. (*To* PRINCE) But . . . who are you?

PRINCE (*Lifting her up . . . the* DWARFS *retreat up stage slowly, looking quite bewildered at the turn of events*): A Prince, beautiful Snow White.

SNOW WHITE: Yes, I know now. You are my Prince, aren't you? The Pedlar said I would marry a prince.

PRINCE (*Laughing*): Really? Then we'll go and make arrangements for the wedding this very moment.

SNOW WHITE (*Hesitating*): But . . . the Dwarfs, I couldn't leave them. They took me in and sheltered me when I was lost.

PRINCE: True. And they must be rewarded for their kindness. They will come to our feast and we will visit them every week, as we pass through the woods. So, let's away. (*As the two pass out arm in arm, the* DWARFS *sit down in succession quickly on their little chairs, each one as he does so opening his mouth in blank amazement and gasping. Before the last* DWARF *sits, while interest is still at its height, the curtain falls.*)

THE END

Little Bird in the Tree

by Eleanore Leuser

Characters

KING
PRINCESS, *his daughter*
LADY DIANE
HERALDS
LORD TUCK
THE STUDENT
THE ARTIST
THE POET
PLAIN JOHN

SETTING: *A room in the palace of the King. To the back is a large window which looks out on the leafy branches of a tree. There is a bird's nest in the branches.*

AT RISE: *The* KING *and the* PRINCESS *are talking together.* LADY DIANE *is standing near the* PRINCESS.

KING: My daughter, it is almost time for our test to begin.

PRINCESS: I do hope it is successful, Father. I am worried that no worthy person will be found to rule half the kingdom.

KING (*Smiling and patting her hand*): . . . or receive your hand in marriage. To you, of course, that is most important. But we have tried every other means and we have no one who is both wise and tender, far-sighted and understanding. This test, I hope, will point out the right man.

PRINCESS: Indeed, I hope it does. (*Leaning over and whispering to* LADY DIANE) I do hope he is handsome. (Two HERALDS *enter.*)

HERALDS: The first applicant for half the kingdom and the hand of the princess is My Lord Tuck from the neighboring kingdom of Eatonia. (LORD TUCK *enters and bows low to the* KING *and the* PRINCESS. *He should be smiling and chubby.*)

PRINCESS (*Behind her fan to* LADY DIANE): He is at least pleasant looking.

LADY DIANE: He looks as if he eats well. (*They both laugh.*)

KING (*To* LORD TUCK): You understand the rules of this test? You are to look out of the window and watch the small bird in that tree. You are to tell us what you observe. The one whose sight, in our opinion, is the keenest and most understanding will win the reward.

LORD TUCK (*Smiling and bowing*): Yes, your Majesty, I am sure I know what you want. I may say that you will find that I see a little differently from most people. (*He goes over to the window, looks out, then returns to the* KING.) Sire, I see a little bird sitting on one of the branches . . . a very plump little bird. He could be made into the most delicious pie that your royal highnesses have ever tasted. I myself have the recipe. (*The* PRINCESS *and* LADY DIANE *make faces of disgust. The* KING *looks interested.*)

KING: Hmn! A pie, eh! Quite an interesting idea. Well, we shall see if anyone sees anything better. If you will stand over there, Lord Tuck, and wait, we will let you know our decision after *all* the applicants have tried. (LORD TUCK *goes over to one side to wait.*) Heralds, the next applicant! (*The* HERALDS *go out and return with the* STUDENT *who is carrying a large book.*)

HERALDS: The next contestant is the Student who has distinguished himself in our halls of learning.

LADY DIANE (*To* PRINCESS): He looks so wise for one so young, your Highness. I am sure he is the right one.

PRINCESS: He looks so wise that he almost frightens me.

STUDENT (*Advancing and bowing*): Your Majesty, I am ready for the test. (*He takes a pair of binoculars from his pocket.*)

KING: Yes, indeed, my friend, you certainly *are* ready. Well, look well and tell us what you see of the little bird in the tree. (*The*

STUDENT *goes to the window and looks intently through his glasses —refers to his book, then looks through his glasses again.*)

STUDENT: I see a yellow bird with black on his head, wings, and throat. He is five inches long. He has a stout conical bill with which to crush seeds. He has nine feathers in the hind section of his wing and twelve in his tail. (*Looking at book*) I would say he belongs to a branch of the Fringillidae family, one of the largest on earth.

KING: Thank you. A most interesting lecture. You know how to observe all the details. Will you wait over there until the final decision? Herald, the next. (*The* HERALDS *go out as the* STUDENT *takes his place beside* LORD TUCK. *They return with the* ARTIST.)

HERALDS: The third applicant who wishes to try his fortune is the Artist whose paintings are known to all.

LADY DIANE (*Behind her fan*): Oh-h, isn't he handsome? You would make a wonderful pair.

PRINCESS: He is almost too good looking to be true. (*The* ARTIST *advances and bows.*)

ARTIST: Your Majesty . . . Your Royal Highness—I am your humble servant.

KING: Well, don't be too humble. Tell us what you see when you look out of the window at the little bird.

ARTIST (*Going to the window*): I see a flash of yellow amongst the foliage . . . a small sunbeam of a bird, part glowing, part clouded. It is an exquisite little symphony of black and gold against the green.

KING: You have good eyes, Artist, and you paint a colorful picture which pleases me much. You, too may wait. Heralds, the next. (*The* ARTIST *waits by the others and the* HERALDS *go out and return with the* POET *who carries a lute.*)

LADY DIANE (*To* PRINCESS): Ah, poor boy, he looks as if he does not get enough to eat. I wish I could mother him.

PRINCESS (*Sighing*): He has such an interesting face. I could like him. (*Whispers to* KING) Father, don't you think he might do? (*The* POET *advances and bows.*)

POET (*Looking out of the window*): I not only see a little bird with the "fatal gift of beauty" but I hear a silver-tongued feathered songster whose deliriously sweet tender song is better than my own. He pours his little soul into the rippling notes and its ecstasy reaches the sky. I would that I might put some of its beauty into words that people might hear it forever.

PRINCESS (*Aside to* KING): Oh, Father, he *must* be the one!

KING: Heralds—is there any one else?

HERALD: Just one, your Majesty.

PRINCESS: Oh, do we have to have him? I am ready to choose now.

KING: Poet . . . in fairness to all, I must ask you to wait for I must let all try who so desire. Heralds, the last applicant. (*The* HERALDS *go out and return with* PLAIN JOHN *who is very plainly dressed.*)

LADY DIANE (*Sniffing*): What very plain clothes! He is a nobody, I am sure.

PRINCESS (*Looking at him intently*): He is different from all the others but I don't know why.

HERALDS: The last applicant for half the kingdom and the hand of the Princess—Plain John! (PLAIN JOHN *comes forward and bows to the* KING *and the* PRINCESS.)

PLAIN JOHN: I am at your service, Sire.

KING: Then look out of the window and tell us what you see of the little bird in yonder tree.

PLAIN JOHN (*Going over to look*): I see a little yellow bird busy helping to raise a family. He is aiding his mate by bringing food and dropping it into the mouths of his young. Oh-h! Wait! (*He disappears out the nearest door leaving everybody to stare after him in great surprise.*)

KING (*Astonished*): What do you suppose was the matter with that young man?

LADY DIANE (*Disdainfully*): One can see that he is not accustomed to court manners.

PRINCESS (*Thoughtfully*): Somehow I like him. I hope he returns.

HERALDS: Sire, shall we close the doors and forbid entrance again to this rude person?

KING (*Firmly*): Not at all . . . not at all. I am curious to learn why he went so hastily. Ah, here he comes. (PLAIN JOHN *enters hastily and comes up to the* KING.)

PLAIN JOHN: I beg your pardon, Sire, but I saw a snake coiled about the tree. It would soon have taken the eggs of the little bird so I hastened to kill it.

KING: You have done well. What think you, my daughter? (*The* PRINCESS *leans over and whispers to the* KING.)

KING: Then I shall announce our decision. All the applicants have seen the same little bird from different points of view. That is good. But the one who is most understanding is the one who saw a little bird as the caretaker of his family and protected him in his need. Plain John, to you goes the half of the kingdom. (*The others applaud.*)

PLAIN JOHN (*Bows low*): Sire, I shall do my best to see always with the same understanding. (*He stands beside the* KING.)

KING: But we have need of many points of view in our kingdom. To Lord Tuck who thinks of mouth-watering recipes goes the position of Head Chef in our realm.

LORD TUCK (*Coming forward*): I thank your Majesty. I shall concoct delicious dishes for your royal household and the people of your kingdom. (*He bows and retreats.*)

KING: And now for our Student with the learned mind. He shall be our Head Scientist and share his wisdom with all our people.

STUDENT (*Coming forward*): I thank your Majesty. I shall do my best to spread learning in every nook and cranny of your domain. (*He steps back.*)

KING: We have great need of beauty also. Therefore our Artist shall head our great museums and art galleries and see that people may feast their souls with beauty.

ARTIST (*Coming forward*): My thanks, Sire. With all the beauties of Nature to inspire us, there should be loveliness for all.

KING: And now we must not forget our Poet. He who can feel the beauty of a bird's song and make others feel it should have a place in our hearts forever. He shall be our Poet Laureate.

POET (*Coming forward*): I thank your Majesty. My happiness comes in singing of what I see and hear. (*He steps back. The* PRINCESS *touches the* KING'S *arm and whispers.*)

KING (*Smiling*): My daughter reminds me that though I bestowed half a kingdom upon the man of our choice, he still has to receive the second half of his reward. Plain John, step forward. (PLAIN JOHN *does so and the* KING *places the hand of the* PRINCESS *in* JOHN'S.) Here is the hand of the Princess. Long may you both live and rule over the kingdom with understanding and sympathy for all.

(*The others applaud as the* PRINCESS *and* PLAIN JOHN *stand with clasped hands.*)

THE END

Star Light and the Sandman

by Gladys V. Smith

Characters

SEVEN EARTH CHILDREN	SIX STARLETS
STAR LIGHT	TWO STAR BOYS
SANDMAN	

SETTING: *The edge of the wood.*

1ST CHILD: Do you think Star Light will be out tonight?

6TH CHILD: I hope so.

7TH CHILD: It's a little cloudy.

1ST CHILD: I hope I see her first.

2ND CHILD: I hope I do!

3RD CHILD: Do you think Star Light will make my wish come true?

4TH CHILD: Star Light always grants the children's wishes. The star dust she uses has the very best magic in it. The clown at the circus told me so!

STAR LIGHT (*Peeps out from behind the cloud*): I wonder if the Earth Children are watching for me tonight. Yes, there they are!

5TH CHILD: There she is! I see Star Light!

1ST CHILD: Where?

7TH CHILD: Where?

5TH CHILD: She is peeping from behind that baby cloud. (STAR LIGHT *steps out. She trips lightly about and returns to stand near the cloud. Each time she speaks she "flutters" her fingers above her head to represent twinkling.*)

2nd Child: I see her!

4th Child: So do I!

Others: And I!

Star Light: Here I am, Earth Children! Thank you for watching for me. Send me your wishes quickly so that I may make you happy!

Children:

Star Light, Star bright,
First star I see tonight,
I wish I may, I wish I might
Have the wish I wish tonight!

1st Child: I wish for a four-leafed clover!

2nd Child: I wish for some shiny new pebbles!

3rd Child: My wish is for a snail shell.

4th Child: Star Light, please help me find a patch of strawberries.

5th Child: Some catnip for my kitten! That's what I'd like, Star Light.

Star Light: I'll give you your wishes! I'll make them come true! (*She dances lightly about. From the bag which she carries she pretends to scatter star dust.*)

3rd Child: My wish didn't come true! I don't see any snail shell.

1st Child: And I haven't any four-leafed clover!

Star Light: Dear me! Whatever has happened to my magic star dust? It doesn't sparkle as it should! And the children aren't getting their wishes!

2nd Child: I did want some shiny new pebbles. Star Light never disappointed me before.

Star Dust: Why this isn't star dust at all. It hasn't a bit of sparkle. It looks like gray sand—Oh dear! Oh dear!

6th Child: I'm so sleepy. (*Yawns.*)

7th Child: I'm sleepy, too.

1st Child: Ho hum!

All Children: Ho hum! (Star Light *continues to dance.* Chil-

DREN *yawn, nod, and relax into sleepy positions.* STAR LIGHT *stops in amazement.*)

STAR LIGHT: Oh, oh! The children are going to sleep. And their wishes are not coming true. What shall I do? What shall I do? I'm going back behind my cloud right now and have a good cry. (*Runs behind the cloud.*)

STARLETS (*Trip on to stage, join hands to form ring and dance*):

Twinkledy, twinkledy, twink!
We're just as gay as you think!
  We are Starlets, you know,
  Sending starshine below.
Twinkledy, twinkledy, twink!

1ST STARLET: Where is Star Light?

2ND STARLET: Oh, she's probably busy scattering star dust.

1ST STARLET: I don't see her.

2ND STARLET: Let's play some more.

STARLETS:

Twinkledy, twinkledy, twink,
When the midnight sky is like ink,
  We tickle the moon
  While the wind plays a tune.
Twinkledy, twinkledy, twink.

1ST STARLET: Something must have happened to Star Light. She always comes out to play with us. (*She goes over and pretends to knock against the cloud.*)

STARLETS: Yoo hoo! Oh, Star Light!

4TH STARLET: Come on out and play with us, Star Light!

STAR LIGHT (*Peeps from behind cloud*): I don't want to.

3RD STARLET: Why, Star Light, you've been crying!

5TH STARLET: Whatever is the matter?

2ND STARLET: Why are you so sad?

STAR LIGHT (*Stepping out from behind cloud*): If you must know, it's about my star dust.

5TH STARLET: Your star dust?

6TH STARLET: Not your *magic* star dust?

STAR LIGHT: My magic star dust. It didn't work right tonight. It didn't make the children's wishes come true.

STARLETS: Oh my!

STAR LIGHT: And that isn't all. The children went to sleep. They've never done that before. They always wait for the Sandman before they go to sleep.

3RD STARLET: I just can't understand it.

STARLETS: Nor I!

1ST STARLET: We'll have to think of some way to help you. (*Each drops to floor and sits tailor-fashion, with elbow on knee, and chin in hand, in attitude of deep thought.*)

2ND STARLET: I'm thinking!

3RD STARLET: I'm thinking too!

STARLETS: So am I!

4TH STARLET: I might lend you my lucky horseshoe.

STAR LIGHT: No, thank you, Glitter! You need that yourself.

5TH STARLET: I'll be glad to give you my comet's feather. That is very magic.

STAR LIGHT: That is sweet of you, Twinkle, but I really couldn't take it. Besides you're the only one who can make it work. (SANDMAN *enters, walking slowly. He appears dejected and walks with head thrust forward and hands in pockets.*)

1ST STARLET: Here comes the Sandman. Let's ask him to help us. (STARLETS *jump to their feet.*)

STARLETS: Good evening, Mr. Sandman.

SANDMAN: Evenin'! Humph!

STARLETS: Is—is something the matter?

SANDMAN: Matter? I should say there is! Let me ask you one question!

STARLETS: Yes, Mr. Sandman.

SANDMAN: Who did the Man in the Moon appoint as Head Putter-to-Sleep of the Earth Children?

STARLETS: Why *you*, of course, Mr. Sandman.

SANDMAN (*Slowly and emphatically*): But the Earth Children are already asleep. Someone has been using my Go-to-Sleep sand. Now, you know that isn't fair.

STARLETS: Oh my!

SANDMAN: And that's not all. Tonight when I went to the sky storeroom to get my dreambag of sand, what do you think? The bag was gone!

STARLETS: Oh my!

SANDMAN: And in its place was this bag of shiny dust.

STARLETS: Oh my!

STAR LIGHT: Oh, Mr. Sandman, I'm so sorry. I put the Earth Children to sleep but I didn't mean to.

SANDMAN: You put the Earth Children to sleep? My stars and comets! How did you happen to do that?

STAR LIGHT: I heard the children wishing on me, because I was the first star of the evening. I picked up this bag in a hurry. I thought it was full of my magic stardust.

SANDMAN: Why, that's my dreambag full of sand. No wonder you put the children to sleep.

STAR LIGHT: I—I'm very sorry. I wish there were something I could do to make up for all the trouble I've caused you, Mr. Sandman.

SANDMAN: Why, there *is* something you can do, Star Light. Since you've used all the sand from the dreambag would you let me help you use this stardust? It must be yours.

STAR LIGHT: Of course, Mr. Sandman. I'll be glad to have you use it.

SANDMAN: I've always wanted to make the children's wishes come true. Now I'll do it while they are asleep.

STAR LIGHT: And when they waken they will have their wishes. What fun! What fun! (SANDMAN *skips about scattering stardust.* STAR LIGHT *darts about touching each* EARTH CHILD. *Near one she drops a four-leafed clover. On the second she drops pebbles.*

On the lap of the third she leaves a snail shell. Strawberries are left in front of the fourth and catnip by the fifth. STAR LIGHT *and the* SANDMAN *then go to the right side of the stage. The* STARLETS *begin to form a ring about them. The* EARTH CHILDREN *rub their eyes, stretch, yawn and waken.)*

1ST CHILD: Hooray! I've found a four-leafed clover. Just what I wished for. Star Light did it!

2ND CHILD: O-o-oh, look! New pebbles. See how smooth and shiny they are! Star Light did it!

3RD CHILD: Did you ever see such a pretty snail shell?

ALL: Star Light did it!

4TH CHILD: And here is a patch of strawberries (*Starts picking berries.*)

5TH CHILD: Fresh catnip! I knew Star Light wouldn't forget me!

ALL: Thank you, Star Light! You never fail us!

STARLETS:

Twinkledy, twinkledy, twink!
The Sandman as quick as a wink,
Has helped Star Light
To make things right.
Twinkledy, twinkledy, twink.

THE END

The Shy Prince

by Claribel Spamer

Characters

OLD KING	PRINCESS OF GOLD
SHY PRINCE	PRINCESS OF SILVER
PAGE	PRINCESS OF PEARLS
WIZARD	MAIDEN

SCENE 1

SETTING: *The royal throne room.*

AT RISE: *The King is sitting on his throne. The* PRINCE *enters and bows before his father.*

PRINCE: You sent for me, Father?

KING: Yes, son. I am growing old and weak, and it is almost time for you to become king and take over the kingdom. You will need a wise and beautiful wife to help you rule your people, for it is your queen who will tell you when to be gentle and when to be stern. I want you to go now to find a wife that I shall know is suitable, so that I can die with my mind at ease.

PRINCE: But Father, where can I find a girl who would make a fitting queen?

KING: I do not know. That is up to you. I will give you three days. At the end of that time I want you to come back, bringing your bride with you.

PRINCE: Father, I will do my best. But I really don't know where to look.

KING: Today is the first day. You must start at once. (*He rings* *a bell, and a* PAGE *enters. To the* PAGE) Help me to my sleeping chamber. I am going to rest. (*Exits, leaning on the* PAGE'S *arm.*)

PRINCE (*To himself*): Oh, dear! I wish I weren't so shy. I have never liked girls, and now I must marry one. If I should see one, I wouldn't know what to say. I really don't know what to do. (PAGE *reënters.*) Page, what would you do?

PAGE: About what, Prince?

PRINCE: About finding a wife.

PAGE: Well, Your Highness, I don't know what *I* would do. But if I were you, I would consult the Royal Wizard. He can always tell what should be done.

PRINCE: A fine idea! Go get him for me. (PAGE *exits and returns with* WIZARD.)

WIZARD: Good morning, Prince! What can I do for you today?

PRINCE: Wise Wizard, my father has ordered me to marry, but I do not know any girls. I do not even know where to find any. How can I find a charming princess who will make me a good wife?

WIZARD: Just a minute, and I will tell you. (*He takes a crystal ball from the cloak he is wearing. He gazes into it for a minute.*)

If a princess you would marry,
Do not hesitate or tarry.
Find a girl who 'round her neck
Wears a chain of which none reck
The value, for it has great worth—
It holds all happiness on earth.

PRINCE: Thank you, Wizard. Certainly I ought to recognize the girl if I see her wearing such a priceless necklace. What shall I say to her?

WIZARD: Ask her to be your wife and tell her what it will mean. Tell her in your own way. If she is the right girl, she will give the right answer.

PRINCE: I am very grateful to you. I will begin my search right away.

WIZARD: The best of luck to you, Your Highness. May I go now?

PRINCE: YES. (WIZARD *turns to go.*) No, wait a minute! But I don't know where to search. I know hardly anything about my father's country. I went far away to school and then I went traveling abroad. I know nothing about my own land! I don't know where to look for a princess. I don't even know what direction to start in! What shall I do, Wizard?

WIZARD (*Going to a window and looking out*): Look, Prince. (PRINCE *also goes to window.*) See that milkmaid walking along the road below? She is on her way home to her father's farm. She passes this way every day. She has wandered in her daily walks all over the countryside. Why don't you call her and ask her to go with you?

PRINCE (*Calling*): Oho there, Maiden! Will you please stop in here for a moment? (*To the* WIZARD) She nodded, and is coming. Thank you. You may go now. (*The* WIZARD *goes out and the* MAIDEN *enters wearing necklace of flowers.*)

MAIDEN (*Curtsying shyly*): The Royal Prince! Was it you, Your Highness, who called me?

PRINCE: Yes, Maiden. It was I. I need your help. You know more about my father's kingdom than I do. Yet I must travel it to find a wife. Will you kindly go with me and show me my way?

MAIDEN: I would be honored, Royal Prince.

PRINCE: Come, then. Let's start at once, for I have only three days. (*He takes her hand, and they go out together.*)

CURTAIN

* * *

SCENE 2

SETTING: *An outdoor scene.*

AT RISE: PAGE *enters bearing a placard which he holds up for the* *audience to read. On it is written, "The First Day." He exits. The* PRINCE *and the* MAIDEN *enter. She is leading him by the hand.*

MAIDEN: Come. We are nearly to the place where the daughter of Midas spreads her golden hair in the golden sun. She is a beautiful princess indeed. I am sure you will want her for your wife. (*The* PRINCESS OF GOLD *enters from the opposite side. She has long yellow hair which is spread about her shoulders.*) Look! There she is!

PRINCE: Yes, she is beautiful. (*Speaking to her*) Princess of the Golden Hair! (*She sees him for the first time.*) She is the one! See the necklace she wears! (*Going down on one knee*) Princess, I have come seeking a wife. You would make a beautiful queen for this land! Will you consent to marry me?

PRINCESS: Yes, Prince. I would like to be queen. I would like to have a golden crown and a golden throne.

PRINCE: I have no golden crown nor throne to give you. But you shall be kind to my people and help them when they are in trouble. They will love you as much as I shall.

PRINCESS (*Startled*): No gold to give me? Then *I* shan't be your queen! (*Exits.*)

PRINCE: That's funny. She's not the right one. I thought surely a necklace such as she was wearing could buy whatever happiness a person would want. Yet she wanted more gold. I guess I would never have learned to love her, beautiful as she is. Shall we go on? (*The* PRINCE *and* MAIDEN *go off stage. The* PAGE *enters, bearing a placard which says, "The Second Day." He exits, and the* PRINCE *enters again with the* MAIDEN.)

MAIDEN: We have come a long way. Now we shall soon see the daughter of Diana, with her hair shining like silver in the moonlight. (PRINCESS OF SILVER *enters.*)

PRINCE: Here she comes! She is more beautiful than the Princess of the Golden Hair! She wears a silver necklace, too. Perhaps I thought gold more valuable than it is. Perhaps her necklace is more valuable because it is really more beautiful in this moonlight.

PRINCESS: Who is there?

PRINCE: Oh, Princess, it is I, Prince of this kingdom. I am looking for one of royal blood to become my queen. Will you marry me, Princess?

PRINCESS: Yes, Prince, if you will give me silver money. I like to have silver money to buy myself new robes and trinkets.

PRINCE: I will give you silver if you will be kind to my people and love them, and help them when they are in trouble.

PRINCESS: But how can I help them?

PRINCE: If they are hungry or thirsty, give them some of the silver that I give you so they can buy food and drink.

PRINCESS (*Slowly*): No. I'll need it all. I want so *many* things.

PRINCE: I'm sorry, then, but you are not the princess for me. I cannot love you if you will not love my people. (*To the* MAIDEN, *sadly*) Let's go on. The silver necklace is not of great worth, after all. (*They go off stage. The* PAGE *enters with a placard which says, "The Third Day." He exits, and the* PRINCE *and* MAIDEN *reënter. The lights are brighter again.*)

MAIDEN: I am growing very weary. (*She sits down.*) Are we at the seashore yet? (PRINCESS OF PEARLS *enters.*)

PRINCE: Yes. I hear the breakers. And there is a princess coming towards us now. Her hair is moist with pearly salt spray, and she is wearing a necklace of perfect pearls. It must be pearls which have the greatest worth of any jewel, for they are so white that they must symbolize purity. This time we are at the end of our search, I feel sure.

MAIDEN: She is the daughter of Neptune, King of the Sea. Look, she sees us.

PRINCESS: By your look and bearing, you must be a prince.

PRINCE: I am, fair Princess. I am the Prince of this land. I am seeking a wife. I think you would make a very fitting queen for my people. Will you marry me?

Princess (*Slowly*): My father can yet give me many more pearls. Can you, if I should marry you?

Prince: All pearls belong to your father, fair Princess, for they are all of the sea. No, I cannot give you pearls. But you can bestow a pearl of kindness on my people.

Princess: Oh, no, good Prince. Not for me! Why should I work for others when I need not work at all?

Prince: I am sorry, Princess. You are not the one for me, I fear. (**Princess** *exits. To the* **Maiden**) Come. We must continue our journey until we find me a wife who will be good.

Maiden: I am so very tired. I think I can go no farther.

Prince: But this is the third day, and we have very little time. Are there no more princesses in the land for me to seek?

Maiden: I know of none.

Prince: I wish you were a princess. I would make you a queen, for you would be good and kind to all the people.

Maiden: Thank you, kind Prince, but I do not want to be queen. I am already happy, for I love the land—the meadows, the brooks, the woods, and the flowers.

Prince (*Seizing her hand*): The necklace! You are wearing it! The Wizard said the princess for me would be wearing a necklace "of greatest worth" which "holds all happiness on earth." Your necklace holds all happiness! A foolish prince, I! I thought only of what a necklace could buy. But you can't buy happiness. Happiness is seeing beauty about you in the natural things of life, and that's what you were doing when you picked those flowers for your necklace. Marry me and be my queen, for if you are already happy, one such as you will be all the happier for being able to help others, and I shall love you dearly.

Maiden: But I am not a princess. I cannot be queen.

Prince: Yes, you are a princess. You are a princess of Nature, the best kind of all. Anyone can be a princess who wants to be. She must simply be kind and good, that's all.

Princess: Then I shall marry you, and we shall be very happy.

But I want neither gold nor silver nor pearls. I only want you to be a wise and good ruler.

PRINCE: And I will be, for I'll have you to help me. Let's go to my Father quickly and let him approve my choice.

WIZARD (*Entering*): He already knows, and is glad. I showed him in my crystal ball. Come, for all the court is waiting to have a celebration in your honor. (*They go off stage, first the* WIZARD *followed by the* PRINCE, *who holds the* MAIDEN'S *hand.*)

THE END

Mother Goose Gives a Dinner

by J. Lilian Vandevere

Characters

MOTHER GOOSE	JACK AND JILL
TOMMY SNOOKS	SIMPLE SIMON
BESSIE BROOKS	JACK SPRATT AND HIS WIFE
TOMMY TITTLEMOUSE	QUEEN FROM THE PANTRY
TOMMY TUCKER	QUEEN OF HEARTS

SETTING: MOTHER GOOSE'S *house*.

MOTHER GOOSE (*To* TOMMY *and* BESSIE):
What do you think I heard today!
My neighbor, just across the way,
Opened her cupboard door to look,
And she hadn't a single thing to cook!
TOMMY SNOOKS:
Just a bare cupboard?
BESSIE BROOKS (*Sympathetically*):
Poor Mother Hubbard!
MOTHER GOOSE:
Then there's another person, too;
The one who lives inside a shoe.
Why, only today I heard it said
Her children have only broth and bread!
TOMMY SNOOKS (*Eagerly*):
Before they grow thinner
Let's ask them to dinner!

MOTHER GOOSE:
That's easily said!
They ought to be fed,
But who's going to do it?
I couldn't go through it!

BESSIE BROOKS:
You needn't bake, you needn't cook.
Just call the children out of your book
And tell about your neighbors there.
Then every one will do a share.

TOMMY SNOOKS:
You just send out the invitations,
And we'll make all the preparations.

MOTHER GOOSE:
Go tell Boy Blue to blow his horn
Beyond the farthest field of corn,
And when you see the children run,
Then tell them all that must be done.
(*Exit* TOMMY *and* BESSIE)
Well, aren't the darlings tender-hearted.
I think they have my party started!
(*Enter* TOMMY TITTLEMOUSE)

TOMMY TITTLEMOUSE (*Carrying some fish*):
I'm little Tommy Tittlemouse.
You know—I live in a little house.
I had these fish and so I brought them.
I hope you won't ask where I caught them.

MOTHER GOOSE:
I'll never ask. Perhaps you buy them.
At any rate I'll keep and fry them.
What better food could company wish
To start their meal than good fresh fish?
(*Enter* TOMMY TUCKER)

TOMMY TUCKER (*Carrying bread and butter*):

I heard you've company coming for tea,
So here's some bread and butter from me.
I sang to earn it, but my, oh my,
Those children need it far more than I!
And so I brought it for them, instead.
Just see how thickly the butter's spread!

MOTHER GOOSE:
Thank you, Tommy Tucker!
You'll realize, some day,
The things that you enjoy the most
Are those you give away.
(*Enter* JACK *and* JILL *with pail.*)

JACK:
We heard about the party

JILL:
We thought just what to bring.

JACK:
And so we took our shiny pail
And hurried to the spring.

JILL:
We knew you'd need fresh water
And so we didn't stop

BOTH:
Until we got the pail right here,
And never spilled a drop!

MOTHER GOOSE:
How very good of you to think
That every child would want a drink.
(*Enter* SIMPLE SIMON, TOMMY *and* BESSIE.)

TOMMY SNOOKS (*Crossly*):
Simple Simon tagged along
Although I *told* him it was wrong.

BESSIE BROOKS:
But he's so good and you're so kind

We thought perhaps you wouldn't mind.
MOTHER GOOSE:
Why, not at all. Now let him say
What brings our Simon here today.
SIMPLE SIMON (*Has eggs and milk, speaks slowly*):
I tried to buy a pie for a penny,
But when I looked—I hadn't any!
I tried to find some work to do
To earn a penny pie for you.
But see—I met that smart black hen
Who lays fine eggs for gentlemen.
And here's a dozen, fresh and brown.
I brought them all the way from town.
And sing hey ho and nonny nonny,
Here's good fresh milk from Cushy Cow Bonny.
MOTHER GOOSE:
We need no pies from any pieman,
But we do need cheers for Simple Simon. (*All cheer*)
Our guests shall have just what they ought,
The eggs and milk that Simon brought.
(*Enter* JACK *and* MRS. SPRATT, *carrying a ham.*)
JACK SPRATT:
I'm Spratt. I eat no fat.
MRS. SPRATT:
And I can eat no lean.
JACK SPRATT:
We could have gobbled all this ham,
And licked the platter clean.
MRS. SPRATT:
But then we heard about your friends,
And Mother Hubbard's larder.
JACK SPRATT:
While giving up the ham *was* hard,
To think of them was harder.

MRS. SPRATT:
I sniffed and sniffed, it smells so good.
The fat is browned so nicely!
JACK SPRATT:
We want it shared. That's understood.
MRS. SPRATT:
Yes, that's the point precisely.
MOTHER GOOSE:
This ham is bound to be the best
That any guest has tasted.
It disappears, but then, my dears,
No loving thought is wasted.
Fish and meat, eggs and bread—
A bountiful table can be spread.
Fill the milk and water glasses,
Enough for hungry lads and lasses.
Mercy me—it's not complete!
Nobody thought of something sweet!

(*Enter* QUEEN *from pantry with jar of honey and* QUEEN OF HEARTS *with plate of tarts. They bow to each other very formally, say, "Your Majesty!" then approach* MOTHER GOOSE.)

QUEEN FROM THE PANTRY:
My dessert is very simple,
But I'm certain it will please,
So accept this jar of honey
From the royal hive of bees.
MOTHER GOOSE:
Thanks, your Majesty! It's true
Your honey's not more sweet than you.
QUEEN OF HEARTS:
From the royal pantry shelf
I bring you tarts I made myself—
Cherry tarts, all rich and red,
Or—here's damson plum, instead.

And you'll find a pleasant tang
In my special lemon meringue.
MOTHER GOOSE:
Well, I really do declare—
This tops off the bill of fare!
And I know our guests will feel
There was never such a meal.
Now we'll go and set the table
Just as fast as we are able.
(*Children rise*)
But, before you children go,
Tell me—if you think you know—
Why, with all the work you've done,
You have still been having fun.
ALL: It's the best fun to be had—
Making other people glad.

THE END

Production Notes

BIRTHDAY GIFT

Characters: 4 male; 3 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: All of the characters are dressed in appropriate costumes of the Civil War days.

Properties: Broom, stuffed cat.

Setting: A street in Washington, D. C. At the front of the stage at left is a tree. A stuffed cat is sitting on one of the branches. A picket fence may be used to indicate the yard, and a few bushes or shrubs may be placed near the fence.

Lighting: No special effects.

THE GIFT OF THE FAIRIES

Characters: 1 male; 1 female; 15 Indian fairies, male or female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Mrs. Lincoln wears a long dress with an apron over it. Tom Lincoln is dressed as a farmer of the period. The Fairies wear Indian costumes.

Properties: Doll to be used for baby, wreath of oak leaves.

Setting: The interior of a log cabin. There is a fireplace at the back; a door at the side. Crude furniture is placed about the room. A cradle stands to one side. There is a bearskin on the floor in front of the fireplace.

Lighting: No special effects.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S CHILDREN

Characters: 4 male; 2 female.

Playing Time: 15 minutes.

Costumes: The children are dressed in simple play clothes. President Lincoln wears a black suit and black tie. The Soldier's Mother wears a bonnet, shawl, and hoop skirts, and carries a handkerchief. Julia wears a hair ribbon. The doll is dressed in bright-colored bandanna, Turkish trousers made from the red bandanna, and wears a paper knife as a sword.

Properties: A doll, pin, red bandanna, paper knife, hair ribbon, envelope with red seal, paper for doll's pardon.

Setting: At the center back of the stage, which represents a corridor in the White House, is a door on which is printed, "Private, His Excellency, the President of the United States." Through the door a desk may be seen, with the President's chair in back of it facing the door. Above the door is an American flag with 34 stars. On either side of the door are benches, and on the walls early portraits of Washington and other presidents. There are other entrances at the ends of the corridor.

Lighting: No special effects.

Note: A Zouave in the Civil War was like a Commando in World War II.

THE QUEEN WITH THE BROKEN HEART

Characters: 2 male; 4 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: The Queen wears a long robe trimmed with red hearts. The King is dressed similarly. The Lady-in-Waiting wears a long dress with a tall pointed hat. The Page is dressed in Knave of Hearts costume. The Fairy Godmother is dressed in gray and wears a tall, peaked gray hat. Spring wears a long white dress with flowers.

Properties: Knitting for Queen; handkerchief for Queen; locket; wand; large gaily decorated Valentine box filled with Valentines.

Setting: All that is required is two large chairs with a small table holding a plant beside one, and a pile of large books on the floor beside the other. A hassock stands in front of the King's chair.

Lighting: No special effects.

A NEEDLE FIGHTS FOR FREEDOM

Characters: 3 male; 6 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: All the characters wear the costumes of the Revolutionary period.

Properties: Sewing for girls, paper for Washington.

Setting: A parlor furnished simply in the style of the Revolution. Five stools are at center. At right are several chairs. Door at left leads to rest of house, door at right to street.

Lighting: No special effects.

WASHINGTON'S SACRIFICE

Characters: 4 male; 2 female.

Playing Time: 12 minutes.

Costumes: Clothes of the Colonial period.

Properties: Newspapers, wagon wheel.

Setting: The dining room at Mount Vernon. A long dining table is at the left. Newspapers, other papers, quill pens are scattered on the table. To the right is a fireplace with a rocker near it. Other chairs are near the table.

Lighting: No special effects.

THE BOY WHO COULD NOT TELL A LIE

Characters: 6 male; 2 female; extras.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Clothes of the Colonial period.

Properties: Bow, little hatchet, feathers, bows and arrows, bundle of switches.

Setting: A parlor furnished in Colonial style. Window shows an orchard with bare trees. At one side is an embroidery stand on which is a cloth with the Washington arms outlined. A chair and small footstool are beside this stand.

Lighting: No special effects.

ST. PATRICK AND THE LAST SNAKE OF IRELAND

Characters: 11 male; 2 female.

Playing Time: 15 minutes.

Costumes: St. Patrick is dressed in a brown monk's robe with a rope for a belt. He carries a staff. The Irish children are dressed in ragged clothes and are barefooted. Costumes for the Spiders may be made of black squares of shiny cloth with holes to let heads through. The faces may be streaked with black. Or the children may carry large toy spiders, if available. The costumes for the Snakes may be made of brown squares of cloth with holes for heads. The material may be painted or spotted in a snakelike pattern. Or the children may carry toy snakes. Smallest snake is dressed like others at first, but wears a green costume at end, as indicated.

Properties: Staff for St. Patrick; toy snakes and spiders.

Setting: Potted plants or crepe paper bushes simulate trees to the left of stage. At the extreme right, rocks and an old anchor point the way to the sea.

Lighting: No special effects.

FLIBBER TURNS THE TABLES

Characters: 3 male; 1 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: The rabbits wear everyday clothes, but have long white ears attached to their heads and small white cotton tails.

Properties: Blackboard, chalk, eraser, carrot, striped hat, drum, Santa hat and beard, bells, basket of carrots, blonde wig, pinafore apron, sign, large Easter basket, candy.

Setting: Flibber's front yard. Upstage center is a "house" with a sign: Flibber—His House. (The house may be made of four card tables, three tied side by side and parallel with the front, and the fourth, under which the props are placed, adjoining and behind the middle table. Over the tables a dull material may be thrown. There is an opening under the middle table for Flibber to enter the house.) A picket fence and bushes may be placed in front of the house.

Lighting: No special effects.

THE BUNNYLAND BRIGADE

Characters: 7 male; 1 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: The Bunnies may be dressed in white, with long "ears" attached to their heads and large puffs of cotton for "tails." Mistress Hen wears a long skirt, and draped over her arms are pieces of cardboard painted to resemble wings. Danny Dwarf has a pointed cap, long tunic, and tight-fitting trousers. He also has a long white beard.

Properties: Baskets for Bunnies and Mistress Hen; pail and brush for Danny Dwarf.

Setting: Bunnyland. At left center is a tree stump, at right center a small haystack. Cabbages and carrots can be used for decorative purposes, either in giant cardboard size or painted on a backdrop.

Lighting: No special effects.

A PRESENT FOR MOTHER

Characters: 2 male; 1 female; 4 male or female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Bill and Janie wear everyday clothes. The animals are dressed in costumes suggestive of the type they represent.

Properties: None required.

Setting: Scene 1: All that is required is a large log in the center of the stage, with some bushes around it. Scene 2: A hollow tree stands in center. Other trees and bushes surround it.

Lighting: No special effects.

NO-MOTHER LAND

Characters: 6 male; 2 female..

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Tommy, Samantha and Mother wear everyday dress. Pixies are dressed in dark tight fitting costumes, and wear little pointed hats. Owl is dressed in black. Turtle wears brown costume, and has a cardboard shell attached to his back.

Properties: Handkerchiefs, pixie caps, stick.

Setting: A woods. In one corner is a tree. Scattered about the stage are some bushes.

Lighting: No special effects.

RETURN OF THE NINA

Characters: 7 male; 4 female; as many male and female extras as desired to be Indians, members of the crew, and townspeople.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: The townspeople can wear peasant costumes. Columbus and the crew wear sailor's costumes. Indians wear the traditional Indian costumes.

Properties: Handkerchief for Mother.

Setting: The harbor at Palos. Coils of rope, nets, boxes and kegs can be placed around stage.

Lighting: No special effects.

THE MAGIC JACK-O-LANTERN

Characters: Six male or female; extras, if desired.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: The elves are dressed in colored shorts with matching jerkins and pointed hats. They wear long colored hose, the toes of which are stuffed and made to curl up beyond the end of the foot. The goblins are dressed in shorts with matching jerkins, colored differently from the elves' costumes. Trappy wears a large, red leaf on his hat. Micky wears a large red feather in his cap. Flappy should have large cardboard ears placed over his own ears. These may be attached with adhesive tape.

Properties: Jack-o-lantern, broomstick, scarlet leaf, large red feather.

Setting: This may be a bare stage with no furnishings, or a wooded scene may be suggested by the backdrop.

Lighting: No special effects.

THE LITTLE WITCH WHO TRIED

Characters: 8 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Dorothy and Helen wear everyday clothes. The witches are dressed in capes and tall pointed hats; each witch costume is a different color. Fanny has a piece of red flannel around her neck. Winnie has a dress on underneath her cape.

Properties: Broomsticks, broom.

Setting: The kitchen of Dorothy's home. A table and chairs are upstage center, and other appropriate furniture may be placed about the room.

Lighting: No special effects.

THE POP-UP BOOKS

Characters: 9 male, 5 female. (More characters may be added by having more books.)

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: The book characters may wear costumes representing their roles in the stories. Bobby and Jimmy wear everyday clothes.

Properties: Basket for Red Riding Hood; bowls and spoons for the Bears; straw, sticks, bricks, tools for the Pigs.

Setting: A schoolroom. The only necessary props are four large rectangular pieces of cardboard representing books.

They may be different colors. Two stand at left, two at right. Titles are printed on them.

Lighting: No special effects.

LITTLE WHITE CLOUD

Characters: 2 male; 3 female.

Playing Time: 15 minutes.

Costumes: Faith and Charity wear long gingham frocks, aprons, and ribbons around their heads. One of Faith's feet is bandaged. John is dressed in an old white shirt with the collar ironed flat and left open. His trousers are patched. Chief Thunderbird wears a bright blanket, war bonnet and bedroom slippers. Little White Cloud is in an Indian dress, beads, headband and moccasins.

Properties: Some material for Charity to sew on; also needle and thread.

Setting: In the center is a table with a chair on each side of it and a third chair behind it. On the table is a basket of mending, a glass, a pitcher of milk and some gingerbread. At right of stage is a doorway which leads out of the cabin.

Lighting: Dim footlights and candles or lanterns supply the only light.

THANKSGIVING IS FOR EVERYBODY

Characters: 3 male; 4 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Modern dress. The mailman wears a uniform.

Properties: Chalk, blue envelope with letter inside, other envelopes for mailman.

Setting: A yard. Wicker furniture may be placed at center. A fence might be used to suggest the division between the lawn and the sidewalk.

Lighting: No special effects.

THANKS TO SAMMY SCARECROW

Characters: 3 male; 1 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Sammy is dressed as the usual scarecrow—a shabby black coat and pants, a bunch of straw showing out from under a black high hat. Long sticks may be pushed into his sleeves to give him the stiff, scarecrow look. Sandy is dressed in a gray flannel costume and hood. Pipe cleaners may be used for his whiskers, and a large bushy or furry tail should be attached to his back. The children wear everyday play clothes.

Properties: Nuts; basket, gaily decorated; corn stalks.

Setting: The stage is bare except for the scarecrow in the center, leaning haphazardly on crossed sticks. At right center there are some corn shocks to indicate the field.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Characters: 7 male; 5 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Santa Claus wears the traditional red costume. The dolls are dressed in appropriate costumes: Cowboy Doll in a cowboy suit, Mama Doll in a long dress, Teddy Bear in brown, Tin Soldier in a uniform, and Jack-in-the-Box in a jester's costume. The rest of the characters wear everyday dress.

Properties: Small table, set of dishes, large red box for Jack, large key, lasso, teapot, cups.

Setting: The toy section of a department store. At right is a counter full of toys. These include a toy drum and a toy piano. Against the counter is a hobbyhorse. At left is an easy-chair, a brightly decorated Christmas tree, and a sign reading: Don't forget to say hello to Santa.

Lighting: No special effects.

THE CHILDREN OF CHOCOLATE STREET

Characters: 2 male; 8 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: All of the characters wear modern dress except the Fairy who wears a white ballet costume, red and white striped candy-stick hat, and carries a striped candy-stick wand. Miss Krebs wears spectacles.

Properties: Candy boxes (one with picture on cover), candy.

Setting: The interior of a candy store. The entrance, with a bell that can be rung as each person enters, is at right. A long counter displaying candies stretches across the upstage wall. A similar, smaller counter with a cash register runs along the left wall near the exit to the kitchen. Over the long counter is a sign: MISS KREBS' KANDY KITCHEN.

Lighting: No special effects.

THE LONELY FIR TREE

Characters: 5 male; 5 female.

Playing Time: 15 minutes.

Costumes: The Oak Tree can be a tall boy, dressed in a long, grey gown. The Weeping Willow wears a long, light green gown. The Fir Tree is dressed in a long, dark green gown with pockets. The Sparrows wear brown shorts and vest and cardboard wings, covered in brown, may be attached to their shoulders. The Rabbit is dressed in white, wearing a hood with long ears. The children are dressed in modern, everyday clothes.

Properties: A large scarf for Weeping Willow who is identified by her frequent weeping into it; a sandwich, some lettuce or cabbage, bells, tinsel.

Setting: All that is required is the suggestion of snow. This may be done by having some white paper or cotton around the trees and on the ground. If desired, a backdrop showing trees in the distance may be used.

Lighting: No special effects.

FRIENDLY AS CAN BE

Characters: 5 male; 4 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Modern school dress. Pal is dressed in a Dr. Denton sleeping suit dyed brown and has a dog collar and rope about his neck. If desired he can wear a dog mask.

Properties: Paper bag filled with tin cans tied together by string; school bag with books.

Setting: None required.

Lighting: No special effects.

THE BLUE TOADSTOOL

Characters: 6, either male or female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Five of the toadstools wear white sheets and have paper coolie hats. Tinsel's costume is like the others, but is blue.

Properties: A cup marked "Dew."

Setting: A grassy patch. Bushes, shrubs and flowers may be placed around the stage.

Lighting: If desired, the stage may be dark at first and then light up as the first speech is made.

FIRST AID FIRST

Characters: 2 male; 2 female.
Playing Time: 10 minutes.
Costumes: Modern dress.
Properties: Handkerchief for Alice.
Setting: No setting is necessary.
Lighting: No special effects.

THE LITTLEST MONTH

Characters: 9 male; 4 female.
Playing Time: 10 minutes.
Costumes: Father Time wears a long black robe and has a white beard. The Months should be dressed in appropriate costumes.
Properties: Scythe, fans, books, colored leaves, corn stalks.
Setting: Upstage center is a raised dias. On either side of the dias are six chairs. No other furnishings are necessary.
Lighting: No special effects.

THE SEVEN LITTLE SEEDS

Characters: 3 male; 7 female. (If desired, all characters may be female.)
Playing Time: 10 minutes.
Costumes: The Seeds wear brightly-colored flower costumes under their brown paper "pods." The Sun is dressed in yellow, the Wind is gray and blue. The Rain has paper streamers attached to his costume.
Properties: Ray-stick for the Sun, made of a covered flashlight.
Setting: At right is the Seeds' home. Seven cots are lined up. (Blankets and pillows on the floor may be used instead.) A cardboard partition is set up to indicate the door.
Lighting: No special effects.

BISKIE THE SNOWMAN

Characters: 6 male; 3 female.
Playing Time: 15 minutes.
Costumes: The children are dressed for cold weather—snow suits, wool caps, mittens, scarfs, etc.
Properties: Sled, bags of candy.
Setting: Bushes covered with pieces of cotton or artificial snow can be used in the background, or the spotlight can be focused on the Snowman, thus subduing the back-

ground. Or, if you prefer, you can use a box set with Biskie placed inside. Biskie is made with a couple of pasteboard boxes piled one on top of another, then covered with a chicken-wire frame. The boxes should be large enough so that a good-sized boy can stand inside. After covering with the wire, leave openings for pockets. Then cotton or papier mâché is placed over the wire. The back part of Biskie should be open to enable the boy to enter, and it should remain open during the play so that the voice will carry.

Lighting: If a spotlight is to be used on Biskie, it should be covered with blue gelatin to give the effect of cold weather. As the scene progresses, it can become darker.

DOCTOR MANNERS

Characters: 3 male; 4 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Modern dress. Nurse wears a white uniform, Dr. Manners, a white jacket. When Jane enters, her sweater is buttoned wrong.

Properties: Yardstick, magnifying glass, bottle, small brush, bottles of pills, mirror, pink ribbon, jar of lotion, stethoscope.

Setting: The office of Dr. Manners. There is an entrance at right. Against the upstage wall are shelves with bottles and other equipment. Against the left wall is a large desk with a telephone and a big book on it. There is a chair near the desk. At center is a narrow table with a sheet over it. At little to the right of the table is a set of scales. Near the shelves upstage is the Pep-up Ray light, a stand with a flashlight mounted on it. Along the right wall upstage from the entrance are four chairs.

Lighting: No special effects.

GREEN LEAF'S LESSON

Characters: 2 male; the leaves may be either male or female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: The leaves wear capes and matching hats of different colors. Green Leaf wears a green suit and later puts on red cape. Winter Wind is dressed in white and gray, and has a long thin cape made of gauze across his shoulders. Jack Frost wears tight fitting brown trousers, a green jacket, and a pointed cap.

Properties: Paint buckets, paint brush, box, scarf, beads, clip, red cloak for Green Leaf.

Setting: The forest. All that is needed is a tree trunk. Bushes, shrubs, vines and other trees may be added.

Lighting: No special effects.

TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING

Characters: 1 male; 2 female; 6 sprites and 6 pixies may be either male or female.

Playing Time: 15 minutes.

Costumes: Mrs. Donaldson wears an evening gown. The children are in everyday dress. Sprites may be dressed in pastel costumes. The pixies may wear white aprons over dark green pants. They may wear caps and carry towels over their right arms.

Properties: Plates with food (bacon, eggs, potato, spinach); bowl of apples; pitcher of milk; glasses; silverware; handkerchief; draperies and cloth; baskets of flowers; pad of paper; pencil; box of candy; dishes with various rich foods.

Setting: There are doors at left and right, two windows at back. In center, there is a table set for two, a chair at each side. Downstage right and left are easy chairs. A mirror hangs between the windows. There are doors right and left upstage. For scene 2 the table is cleared.

Lighting: No special effects.

MR. BATES GOES TO THE POLLS

Characters: 3 male; 1 female; as many male and female actors as desired to be chickens.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Mr. and Mrs. Bates and Mr. Moore wear modern dress. The Officer wears a uniform with a badge and a cap. The chickens are dressed in yellow, with paper beaks and wings.

Properties: Newspaper and hat for Mr. Bates, knitting for Mrs. Bates, club for Officer.

Setting: The front porch of the Bates home. Two chairs are at center of stage. On the chairs are pillows, and hanging on one chair is a man's hat.

Lighting: No special effects.

FOLLOW THE NORTH STAR

Characters: 4 male; 3 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: For Margery, everyday clothes. Little Bear is a "little boy" bear and his mother is a Mother Bear with apron, dust-cap, knitting and spectacles. Both bears must have long tails with stars on the ends. Draco is mostly tail, well-starred; his costume might be gold, silver, or green, and he should have a dragon-head. If desired, to make him bigger, one or two more boys can be part of his tail. The King and Queen wear straight royal costumes—crowns, robes, scepters—with stars. Polaris wears a dark robe and only one star, very brilliant, in a crown. If it can be made to shine by arranging a small flashlight behind it, held in place by the crown, so much the better. The stars may be cut out from bright gold, silver, blue, green and/or red paper.

Properties: Knitting for Big Bear; handkerchief for the Queen; chairs for King and Queen—two straight chairs, must be light enough so that the King can carry them on stage without any difficulty; scepters for King, Queen and Polaris.

Setting: As the stage represents a bare mountaintop, nothing is required except an astronomical map on back wall showing circumpolar constellations. This may be found in any elementary astronomy book or on page 46 in William Tyler Olcott's *Book of the Stars for Young People.*

Lighting: The effect of starlight when Margery is alone may be indicated by brilliant light when "stars" are on stage.

NAUGHTY SUSAN

Characters: 3 male; 4 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Quaker clothes of the Revolutionary period.

Properties: Samplers for Ann and Susan, cane for Grandmother, watch for Father.

Setting: The living room of a Quaker family in 1776. There are a table, several chairs for the adults and two footstools for the girls, also a bookcase filled with books and if possible a corner cupboard containing some simple china. Additional furnishings may be a spinning wheel, warming pan and copper or pewter bowls. In Scene 2 the table is set with dishes and silverware.

Lighting: No special effects.

THE FIRST FLOWERS

Characters: 3 male; 11 female.

Playing Time: 15 minutes.

Costumes: The brownies wear green frock-tailed coats, long yellow trousers with pointed toes, and high-pointed yellow caps. The fairies wear very short white gauze-like dresses with small sparkling wings attached to the shoulder blades. They wear nothing on their feet, and they carry wands. The Queen of the Fairies wears a long flowing white dress with sparkling wings and a brilliant crown. She is also barefoot. Rags is dressed very shabbily and carries a pack on his back.

Properties: A sack; simulated gold coins; wands; small knife.

Setting: A few potted shrubs may be used to represent the forest. The backdrop should have a lovely forest scene. There is a large rock at one side.

Lighting: No special effects.

ALL HOUSES ARE HAUNTED

Characters: 4 male; 1 female; the Haunts may be either male or female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Mr. Jones and the Boy and Girl wear everyday clothing. The Mystery Man is dressed in black and wears a mask. The Strange Boy has bandages wrapped over his arms and legs. The Haunts may wear everyday clothing and wear signs, or they may be dressed in more elaborate costumes suggesting their parts.

Setting: Living room of a house. A few chairs and tables are placed around the room.

Lighting: No special effects.

CINDERELLA

Characters: 4 male; 4 female; male extras.

Playing Time: 15 minutes.

Costumes: Scene 1: Cinderella wears a ragged cotton dress and is barefoot. Charlotte wears a long yellow gown, and Marie, a long blue gown. Fairy Godmother wears a filmy white dress and carries a star-tipped wand. Scene 2: Same costumes as in first scene. Scene 3: Marie and Charlotte wear plain, long, cotton dresses. Court Gentlemen wear bright coats, dark trousers tucked into black boots. The Prince wears a blue coat, fitted pants, red cloak, and black boots. He carries a wide-brimmed hat. Cinderella is dressed the same as in previous scenes but changes into a long, white filmy dress with a pearl necklace and bracelet, and pearls in her hair. She wears the glass slippers.

Properties: Scene 1: Hand mirror, wand for Fairy Godmother, wire mousetrap. Scene 2: None required. Scene 3: Broom, dress, hood, one glass slipper; the other glass slipper must be in Cinderella's apron pocket.

Setting: A kitchen. At left there are table and chairs. Upstage left is a door. Backstage is a big fireplace. At right is a cupboard, a chair and another door.

Lighting: No special effects.

THE LION AND THE MOUSE

Characters: 7 parts, may be taken by either male or female actors; more parts may be added by having more hunters.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Mouse is dressed in gray, with pointed ears and whiskers glued on. The Lion wears brown, with a ruff to represent his mane. If possible, the Lion and the Mouse might wear suitable masks. The Hunters are dressed in brown, and wear green Robin Hood caps.

Properties: A net, heavy weights for fastening it to the ground, a large cage on poles.

Setting: A clearing in the forest. Bushes, shrubs and rocks should be placed around the edge of the stage. Some of the bushes should be large enough to hide the Lion and the Mouse.

Lighting: No special effects.

The Princess Who Couldn't Dance

Characters: 6 female; 3 extras.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: The girls may wear either modern or period dress.

Properties: None required.

Setting: All that is necessary are a few gay flower pots placed here and there. Some greenery may be placed at back and sides of the stage.

Lighting: No special effects.

In the Witch's House

Characters: 1 male; 2 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: The Witch wears a long, black dress. Her hair is straggling, and her face is dirty. The Cat is dressed in long, black pants and a matching jerkin and a mask. Under this costume the Cat wears modern girl's dress. The Boy wears modern clothes.

Properties: Rain barrel, faggot broom, large bowl, mixing spoon, can of spice, white handkerchief, towel, two combs, mirror.

Setting: The room is dark and dreary. There is a door upstage center, and a window at the right. A rain barrel stands to the left of the door. Downstage left is a large, brick oven with a closed door with a lock and a key. In the center there is a table and a chair. The broom stands in a corner.

Lighting: Dim lights.

The Morning Maker

Characters: 4 male; as many male extras as desired for Indians.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: The Spaniard wears boots, a leather or velvet jacket over a white shirt, and a felt hat with the crown pushed up and the brim flat. The Indians wear trunks and bright scarves. The Chieftain wears a *serape* or folded blanket over one shoulder. El Gallo should be a small boy, and should be dressed in a costume suggesting a cock, with a tail and feathered wings.

Properties: None required.

Setting: The road to a Mexican Indian village. Bushes and shrubs with brightly colored flowers are placed along the road.

Lighting: The stage should be darkened as indicated in the text. A flashlight should be beamed from the right exit to indicate the sun's first rays.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Characters: 2 male; 3 female.

Playing Time: 15 minutes.

Costumes: The Wolf wears a one-piece garment, like a sleeping suit, of dark brown flannel, surmounted by a wolf's head mask. The other costumes are of simple, peasant type. The Woodcutter always carries his axe except at the end of Scene 4.

Properties: Basket with napkin, red cape with hood, flowers, axe.

Setting: In Scene 1 the Woodcutter's cottage is in center rear, with a door just left of center. Fir trees make the first and second wings. Small flower beds are at right and left of center, projecting from the second entrances. Scene 2 uses the same fir-tree wings as Scene 1. Hiding the cottage, a painted backdrop depicting deep woods extends across the stage just behind the second wings. Scene 3 is a simple interior with door left of rear center, and a window at right. At left of center is a bed. The head, at rear, is screened or curtains may hang down from a canopy above it, to shield it from the door. Beside the bed is a small table, upon which are a book, a knitting bag, and a clock. Right of center, a table, and one or two chairs. Scene 4 is the same as Scene 3.

Lighting: No special effects. Daylight overheads and footlights if desired for Scenes 1 and 2.

LITTLE SNOW WHITE

Characters: 8 male; 2 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Snow White wears a long, full, light-colored dress.

The Pedlar Woman wears a dark, full dress and has a shawl over her head. The Seven Dwarfs are dressed as nearly alike as possible, preferably with long trousers very narrow in the legs, short coats, and toque-shaped hats. The Prince wears fine clothes.

Properties: Tray of goods with straps to go over the shoulders, gold ring, comb and an apple on the tray, small knife, seven small lanterns for the Dwarfs, dishes.

Setting: Woodland cabin, the home of the Dwarfs. A table is placed to the left down stage, seven wooden stools to the right at back, and a small rustic chair stands near the table to the left.

Lighting: No special effects.

THE LITTLE BIRD IN THE TREE

Characters: 8 male; 2 female.

Playing Time: 15 minutes.

Costumes: The Princess and Lady Diane wear long full skirts, tight bodices and full blouses. The King wears a velvet robe and crown. The Heralds wear tight-fitting purple costumes. Lord Tuck is dressed in very bright colors, and wears a cape. The Student, the Artist and the Poet are dressed in pale colors and Plain John wears a black suit.

Properties: Fan, book, binoculars, lute.

Setting: A room in the palace. To the back is a large window which looks out on a tree. There is a bird's nest visible on one of the branches of the tree. Downstage right are thrones for the King and the Princess.

Lighting: No special effects.

STAR LIGHT AND THE SANDMAN

Characters: 3 male; 1 female; 14 mixed players.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: Star Light wears a fluffy yellow dress with a star headdress. The Sandman wears a brownie's suit and a long, peaked stocking cap. The Starlets are dressed like Star Light. The Star Boys wear clown suits. The Children wear modern clothes.

Properties: Bag for Star Light, bag for Sandman, a four-leafed clover, some pebbles, a snail shell, some strawberries and some catnip.

Setting: No setting is required; if desired, a plain blue backdrop may be used. At one side of the stage, the two Star Boys hold a large cardboard cloud.

Lighting: No special effects.

The Shy Prince

Characters: 4 male; 4 female.

Playing Time: 15 minutes.

Costumes: The King is in royal robes. The Prince is richly dressed and wears cloak and boots. The Page is in traditional costume, with short pants caught tightly below the knee and long stockings. The Wizard wears a black cloak on which are pasted silver moons, stars, etc. The Maiden is simply dressed in a pinafore and sunbonnet. Around her neck she wears a chain made of daisies and other bright flowers. All the Princesses are dressed richly. The Princess of Gold wears a gold necklace; the Princess of Silver, a silver necklace; and the Princess of Pearls, a pearl necklace.

Properties: Crystal ball; placards on which are the words: "The First Day," "The Second Day" and "The Third Day."

Setting: For Scene 1 the walls are hung with rich purple drapes. No furnishings are required other than the King's throne at rear. Scene 2 may be played before a backdrop of an outdoor scene, or before a plain dark cyclorama. No furnishings are necessary.

Lighting: No special effects.

Mother Goose Gives a Dinner

Characters: 6 male; 6 female.

Playing Time: 10 minutes.

Costumes: The characters are dressed in the gay costumes in which they usually appear in Mother Goose Books.

Properties: Pail of water, some fish, bread and butter, dozen eggs, milk, ham, jar of honey, plate of tarts.

Setting: All that is required is a table and a few chairs.

Lighting: No special effects.

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